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This statue of Boudica and her daughters on Victoria Embankment, London, was designed by Thomas Thornycroft

Welcome

Folk heroes rarely lose their charm. They are often flawed but noble, brave but vulnerable, weaker than their enemy but able to overcome them. Most are also entirely fictitious, but not Boudica. She was very real, although perhaps no less fantastic thanks to the limited resources available to us to understand her Iceni people and their struggle against Roman occupation.

Her enduring fame and cult status is no surprise, however. The British love an underdog, despite our imperial experience where the nation was mostly on the other side of such tales. The rediscovery of her history in Britain is thought to have happened in the Tudor era, perhaps bolstering the claim of Elizabeth I to be able to lead her people as well as any man could.

This issue we wanted to take a closer look at the warrior queen, so we turned to Tom Garner, features editor of *History Of War*, our sister publication. Plus, we reveal the life of Yuri Gagarin after he became the first man in space 60 years ago, learn about MI9 and its escape training in WWII, and explore the life of Renaissance artist and feminist icon Artemisia Gentileschi, among other things.

Don't forget to turn the page to get details of how you can download a free ebook and some exclusive *All About History* wallpapers for your various devices. I hope you enjoy the issue as always.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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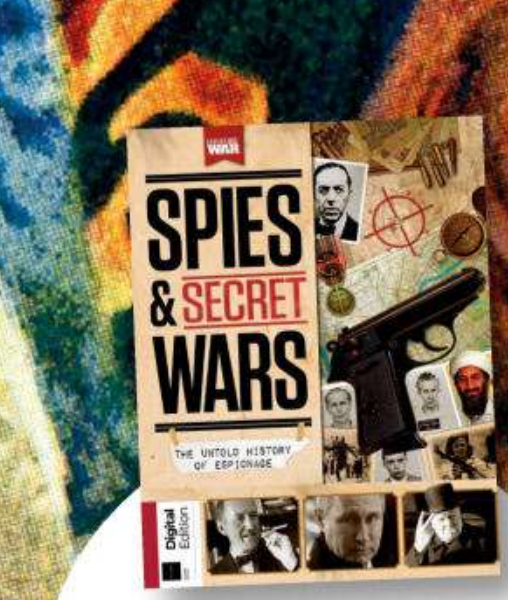
Boudica

Discover how her Iceni uprising almost crushed the Roman invasion



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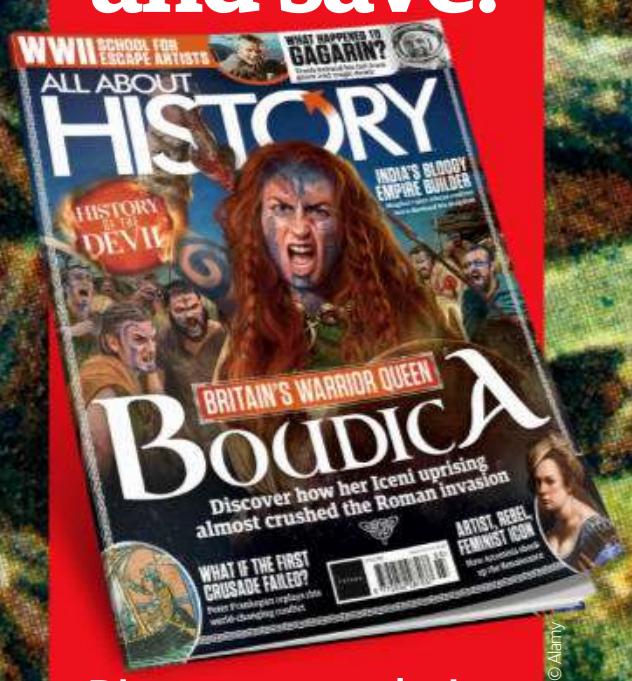
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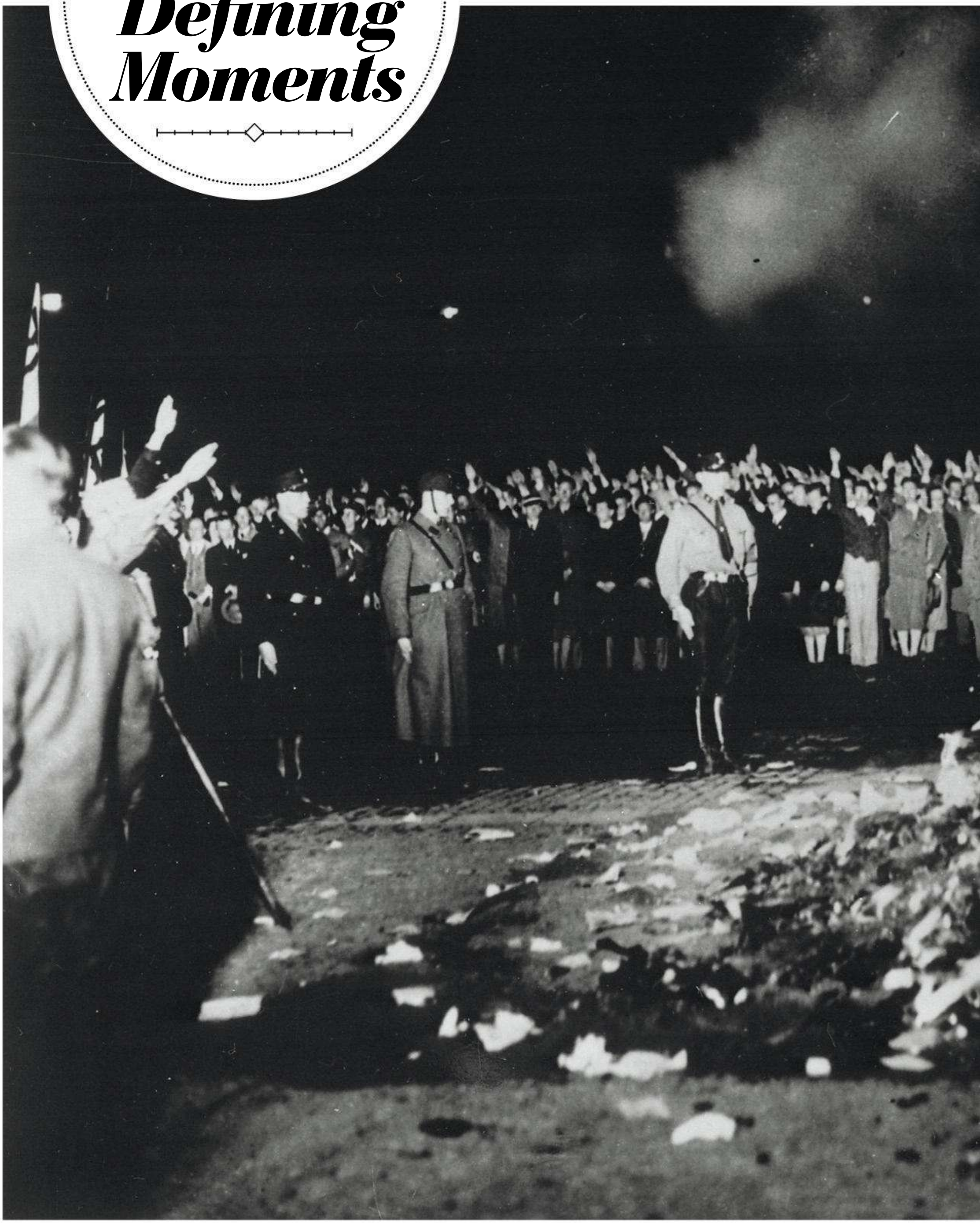

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10 May 1933

BOOK BURNING IN GERMANY

Under the Nazi regime, students nationwide burnt over 25,000 books – many of them written by Jewish authors – that had been blacklisted for being 'un-German'. This included works by well-known writers and intellectuals such as Karl Marx, Albert Einstein, Helen Keller and Sigmund Freud. The event drew widespread international criticism and marked the beginning of extensive censorship in Nazi Germany.

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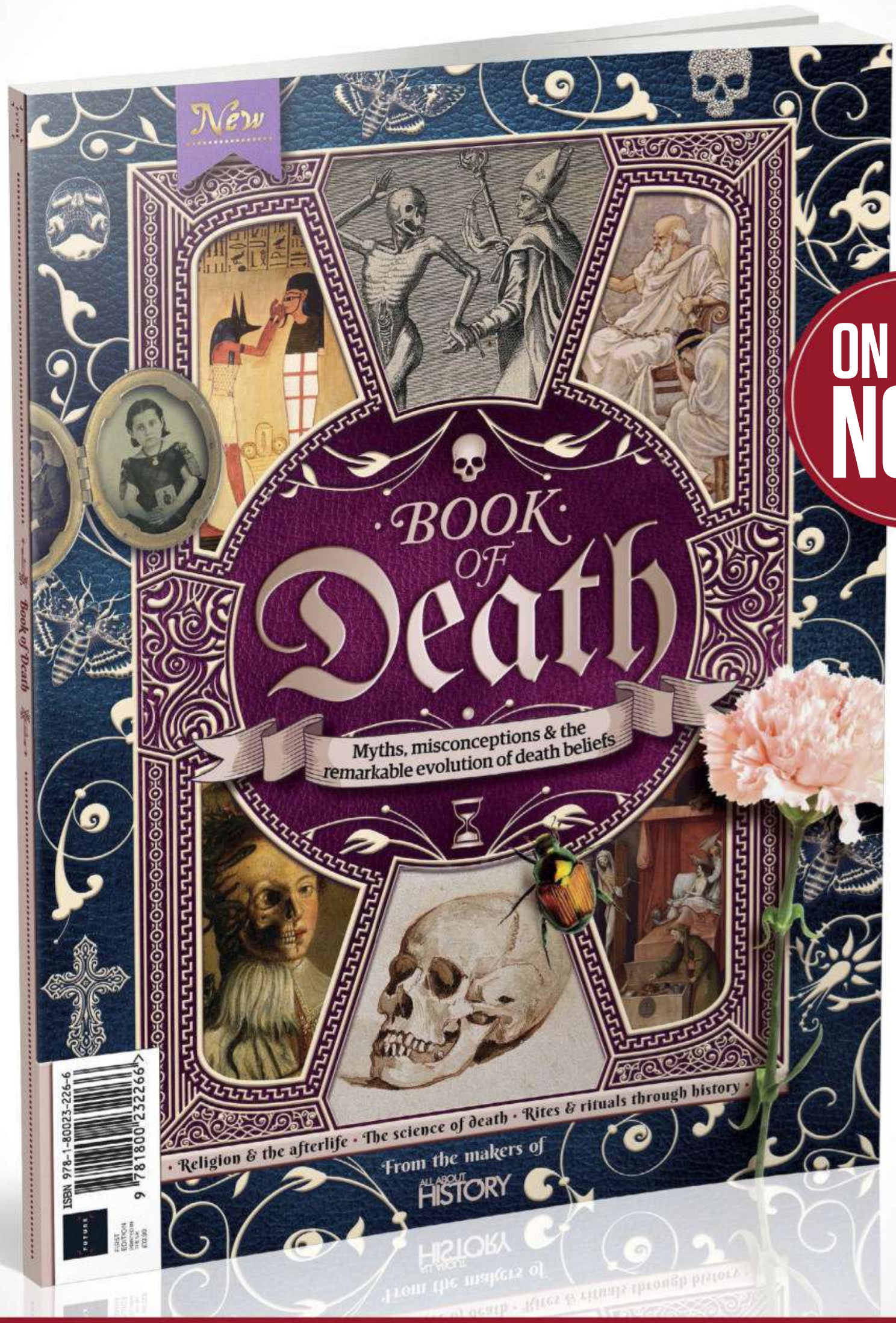
22 April 1970

THE FIRST EARTH DAY

In the United States, 20 million Americans across the country participated in the first Earth Day to raise awareness for environmental causes. It was created by Senator Gaylord Nelson, who wanted environmental issues to become part of the national political agenda – the Environmental Protection Agency was established later that year. Today, over 190 countries celebrate Earth Day annually.

JAILED FOR A CRIME THEY DIDN'T COMMIT? INJUSTICE: WRONGLY CONVICTED HAS IT ALL

You know about Steven Avery's unclear-cut case and overturned conviction. But did you know about the hoardes of others, doing time for crimes they didn't do? Real Crime's *Wrongly Convicted* tells the story of some mind-boggling, fascinating cases.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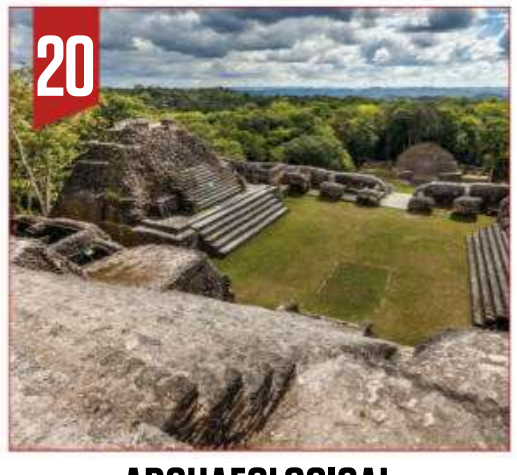
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Main image source: © Getty Images

Written by Jessica Leggett, David Crookes

Key Events

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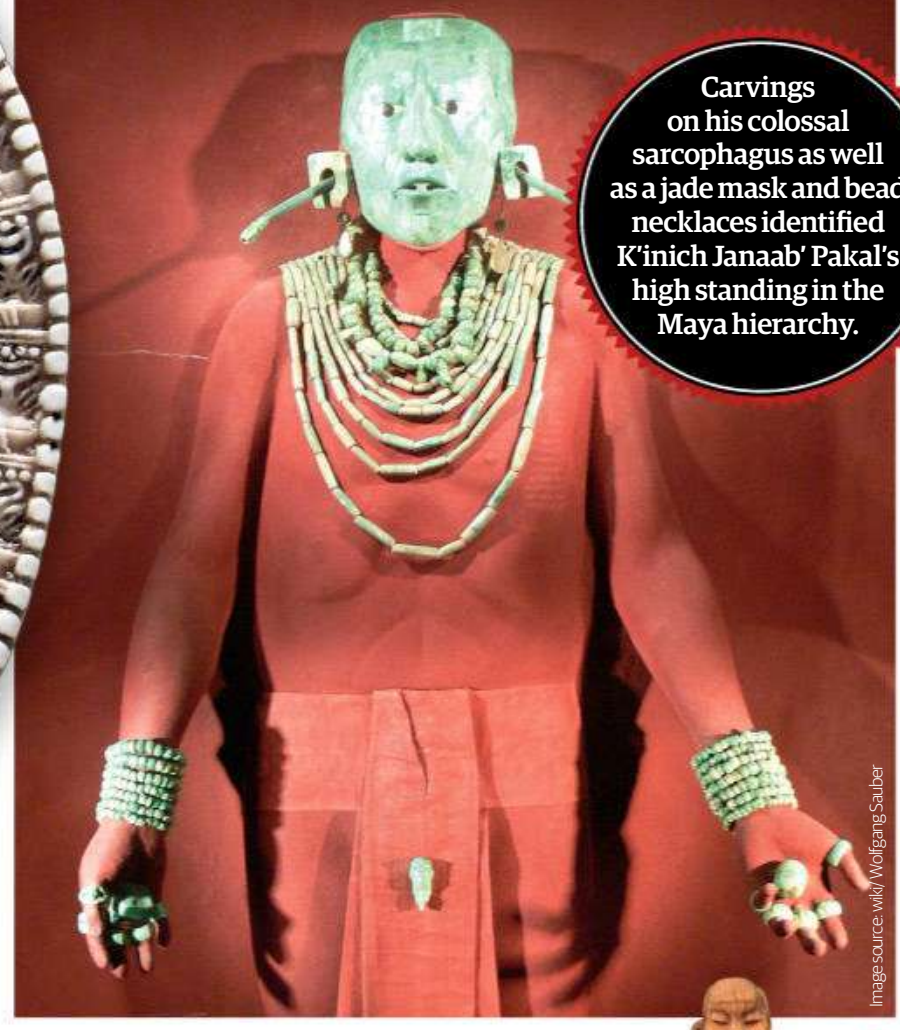
THE MAYA CALENDAR 400 BCE

Influenced by the nearby Olmecs, Maya begin using a Calendar Round made up of three corresponding cycles. First, there is the Long Count, which identifies the year; then there's the divine calendar of Tzolkin and the civil calendar of Haab, which identify days. Monuments have Long Count dates on them.

EMPEROR PAKAL RULES 615

One of the great Maya leaders is K'inich Janaab' Pakal. He rules over the city-state of Palenque from the age of 12, remaining in place for 68 years. In doing so, he becomes the longest ruler of the ancient Maya and is behind the building of fine architecture and bas-relief carvings.



Carvings on his colossal sarcophagus as well as a jade mask and bead necklaces identified K'inich Janaab' Pakal's high standing in the Maya hierarchy.

Image source: wiki/ Wolfgang Sauber

WORLD IS CREATED 3114 BCE

Although hunter-gatherers have been in the area for about 8,000 years, Maya believe that our world was created in this year.

THE FIRST PYRAMIDS 100 BCE

The low, four-sided, stepped pyramid at Uaxactun (named E-VII-sub) is among the first such monumental structure to be built. Monuments are built using local materials.

CLASSIC ERA BEGINS 250 CE

The Maya civilisation enters a golden age during which agriculture flourishes, populations rise and city-states emerge throughout Central America thanks to large-scale urbanisation.

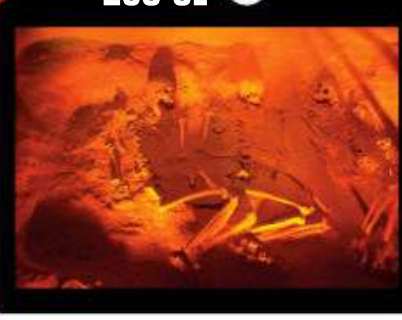
3114 BCE — 1800 BCE — 400 BCE — 250 CE — 550

BIRTH OF A CIVILISATION 1800 BCE

The first permanent Maya settlements are established in the Soconusco region that is now in the state of Chiapas, Mexico. Farming becomes effective and figurines are produced.

EXPANDING SOCIETY 1000 BCE

A complex society emerges. Larger settlements are established and trade expands, with the Maya moving up the river valleys. A ceremonial site, Aguada Fénix, is built.



TEOTIHUACAN IS SACKED 550

As typical of the conflicts between city-states, there is evidence that Teotihuacan's key monuments were burned. Economic decline sets in and its power diminishes.

MAYA SYSTEM OF WRITING 300 BCE

As well as a strong social structure placing kings and nobles at the top, a logosyllabic system of hieroglyphic writing develops, with the earliest inscriptions adorning ceramics, bone and stone. Many of the complex inscriptions record events, but some are religious.

More than 800 individual glyphs are eventually developed, each representing words or syllables.

Image source: wiki/ Kwamikagami

TEOTIHUACAN FLOURISHES 1 CE

Cities are flourishing. Pyramids, courts and temples are being built and major metropolises have emerged, including Tikal (established in 550 BCE), soon-to-be-abandoned Cerros and El Mirador – the latter previously flourishing since 600 BCE. Having grown since 200 BCE, the city of Teotihuacan becomes the largest in Mesoamerica – key for trade, religion and culture. Teotihuacan's largest building, Pyramid of the Sun, is built in 200 CE.

Image source: wiki/ Gorgo

Mayapan means 'flag of the Maya people' and the city-state consisted of around 4,000 structures.

A NEW CITY 1250

After abandoning Chichén Itzá, the Uicil-abnal (or Itzá as they become known) decide to build a new city called Mayapan, 60 miles to the west. It becomes the new capital of the Yucatán Peninsula and while it isn't of the size and complexity as previous cities, it will flourish until the 15th century.

Image source: wiki/ Joeldesalvatierra

TIKAL AT ITS PEAK
750

The once-conquered city-state of Tikal reaches its peak with a population of 60,000. But wars between cities spark the beginning of the end for the region's prosperity.

DRESDEN CODEX
1150

The decorative *Dresden Codex* describes local history and astronomical tables over its 78 pages. It's one of four known Maya books, or Codices.

AIRSTRIP IS BUILT
1951

An airstrip built by the Guatemalan army makes it easier for archeologists to visit nearby Maya ruins, leading to an increase in excavation work and historical discoveries.

Image sources: wiki/NASA, wiki/Metropolitan Museum of Art, wiki/Raymond Ostertag, wiki/SLUB Poster, wiki/Simon Burchell

750

EL TAJIN PROSPERS
600

Founded in 100 CE, El Tajin now thrives as a city, home to a large population living in the hills surrounding an area filled with temples, palaces and pyramids.

1150

NOT GRIM UP NORTH
1000

Maya civilisations continue in the north. Chichén Itzá, Edzná, Coba and the wider Yucatán Peninsula (united under the League of Mayapan since 987) become more significant as a result.

1441

MAYAPAN IS ABANDONED
1441

Ah Xupan, ruler of the Tutul Xiu, overthrows the royal family of Cocom. Mayapan is sacked; the League of Mayapan dissolved. Yucatán divides into 17 city-states.

Image sources: Met Museum, wiki/Wolfgang Sauber, wiki/Jacob Rus, wiki/John Romkey from USA

A CONFUSING COLLAPSE
900

It is not known why the Maya abandoned their cities in the southern lowlands region but it brings an end to the Classic Period. Could it have been due to disease, foreign invasion, intense population growth or a movement of trade? Scientists found rainfall fell by 70 per cent, so drought may have been the cause.

© Getty Images

Image source: wiki/ myartprints

THE SPANISH CONQUEST
1519

The fourth voyage of Christopher Columbus in 1502 sees European explorers come into contact with the Maya for the first time. It results in conflict (and the introduction of disease), with Spain starting its conquest of the Maya northern territories in 1526. Fierce resistance means the Maya kingdoms are not entirely conquered until 1697.

CHICHEN ITZA

Yucatán, Mexico

c.5th century – 15th century

THE GREAT BALL COURT

Ball courts were built at various Mesoamerican sites and there are several at Chichen Itza – this open-air ball court is the biggest one, at 69m wide and 166m long. Hands and feet could not be used during the Mesoamerican ballgame and players had to use their hips and perhaps even their knees and elbows. Along the sides there are stone rings, decorated with feathered serpents, for a rubber ball to be thrown through.

THE OSSUARY

This pyramid is built in the Puuc architectural style, like the majority of the buildings located in the south of Chichen Itza. Inside, there is a cave where archaeologists have uncovered graves that contained offerings of jade, shell, rock crystal and copper. For this reason, the Ossuary is often referred to as The High Priest's Tomb.

EL CARACOL

One of the few circular structures to be built by the Maya, the El Caracol is an observatory thought to have been used for astronomical observations – for example, we know that they studied the Sun, the Moon, Venus and planetary bodies. The Spanish named the building El Caracol, which means 'snail', because of its interior spiral staircase.

THE NUN'S HOUSE & THE CHURCH

Among the oldest buildings at Chichen Itza is the Nun's House, also known by the Spanish name 'Las Monjas', which is built in the Puuc architectural style. Located next to the Nun's House is the church, a small rectangular building decorated with masks of the deity Chac.

TEMPLE OF KUKULCAN

The Temple of Kukulcan is the most iconic building at Chichen Itza. It is a four-sided pyramid with a staircase on each side leading to the temple located at the top, dedicated to the deity Kukulcan. Inside the pyramid there is a second, smaller, temple thought to have been built by the Maya during the Classical period. The Temple is often referred to as 'El Castillo', the name that was used by the Spanish Conquistadors.

THE TZOMPANTLI

This large platform, also called 'The Platform of the Skulls', is seen as an indicator that human sacrifices were performed during religious ceremonies held at Chichen Itza. Human skulls would be impaled vertically on the Tzompantli, which is also decorated with bas-relief skulls. Interestingly, 'Tzompantli' is actually the Aztec name for these types of structures.

THE PLATFORM OF VENUS

This short structure, located near the Temple of Kukulcan, has stairs on the sides leading to the flat platform at the top, decorated with bas-reliefs of the planet Venus. Although we know it is dedicated to the planet Venus, we do not know how exactly the Maya's used this platform, but it is thought that it was used for ceremonies, dances or rites.

THE SACRED CENOTE

Natural cenotes at Chichen Itza and the water they provided throughout the year made it an ideal place to build a settlement. The Sacred Cenote is the most important one at the site, where the Maya made ceremonial offerings by throwing precious objects into this well, including jade, gold, obsidian and pottery. Human sacrifices were also made by throwing children, maidens and warriors into the cenote, with archaeologists finding skeletons at the bottom of the well.

TEMPLE OF THE WARRIORS

Considered a masterpiece of Mesoamerican architecture, the Temple of the Warriors is a large stepped pyramid, decorated with reliefs of warriors, eagles and jaguars eating human hearts. At the top of the Temple there is a Chacmool, a statue of a reclining figure holding a bowl on its stomach for sacrificial offerings. However, the name 'Chacmool' is not Maya as it was invented by American explorer Augustus Le Plongeon.

GROUP OF A THOUSAND COLUMNS

These columns are laid out in the shape of a quadrangle, partly surrounding the Temple of Warriors. They would have supported a flat roof during Chichen Itza's heyday and it is speculated that the colonnades were used as great meeting halls or even for religious purposes. Despite the name, there are in fact only 200 columns in total.

Illustration by: Adrian Mann

Chichen Itza – which translates to 'at the mouth of the well of the Itza' – is the remarkable ancient city that was once the political, social, commercial and economic centre of the Maya civilisation. Although archaeologists are uncertain about when Chichen Itza was first established, it is often cited as between the 5th and 6th centuries. However, we do know that the city had become a major capital within the Yucatán peninsula by the 10th century, at the end of the Classic period.

At its height, Chichen Itza was home to tens of thousands of people, with a diverse population of Maya from across the peninsula and beyond. The Toltec civilisation appears to have also influenced construction in the city from the end of the 10th century, but the reason why is still debated – they either invaded Chichen Itza or a cultural exchange occurred through trade.

Regardless, this led to a fusion of different architectural styles at Chichen Itza. These can be see within the many complexes at the site, such as The Great North Platform (including the Temple of Kukulcan and Temple of the Warriors), The Osario Group in the middle (including the Ossuary) and The Central Group in the south (including El Caracol and Las Monjas).

Chichen Itza declined by the mid-13th century as the city of Mayapan rose in prominence to become the new urban hub, and it was abandoned during the 15th century. The ruins of the city were rediscovered and excavated in the 19th century and it has remained an active archaeological site ever since. A popular tourist destination and a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1988, the ruins are commonly associated with the Temple of Kukulcan, the tallest building in the city and one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.

Anatomy

MAYA SCRIBE

Mesoamerica
c.250–900

SOCIAL STATUS

Scribes were trained under the tutelage of Maya priests and were most likely members of the elite, as commoners could not read or write. It is thought that some scribes could have belonged to royalty, and historical evidence also suggests that there may have been female scribes as well.

TYPICAL DRESS

Many depictions of Maya scribes in art appear to show them wearing a long loincloth, usually worn by male commoners every day, with a hip cloth tied around the waist. It also seems that they typically did not wear any clothing on their upper body, apart from jade jewellery.

INK WELL

Thanks to both Maya art and archaeological evidence, we know that scribes would use ink wells made out of the halves of conch shells. They would usually be filled with black or red ink – the surviving Maya codices were written using these colours – and possibly with other pigments.

FUNCTIONAL HEADWEAR

The Maya had many different types of headdresses, but surviving sculptures and art seem to depict scribes wearing ones made out of cloth. These cloth headdresses were useful because they could be used to hold the scribes' brushes, using a knot tied at the forehead.

SOPHISTICATED SYSTEM

The Maya writing system is logosyllabic, combining the use of logograms (signs representing words) and syllabograms (signs representing syllables). There are over 1,000 different Maya signs, although scribes only used up to 500 at any one time. To this day, there are still many signs that remain undeciphered or not well understood.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Unfortunately, the writing instruments used by the Maya have not survived. However, judging by depictions of scribes in Maya art, it is believed that they may have used brush pens (using fibres or even rabbit hair) quills or possibly reeds. It's likely that they had more than one type of instrument to write with.

WRITING MATERIAL

Maya scribes would work with different mediums, including stone and pottery. Paper was produced by pounding the bark of a fig tree into a sheet, which was dried in the sun and then covered in a thin layer of plaster. A book, called a codex, was made by folding a piece of paper like an accordion and covered with jaguar skin.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

WHISTLE FIGURINE

Music was a very important part of Maya culture
Mexico, 7th – 8th century

For the Maya and, indeed, other Mesoamerican civilisations, music was central to societal, religious and cultural life. Many pieces of surviving Maya art, for example on vases and other pottery, depict scenes involving music and musicians. These images stand as a testament to the crucial role music played in ceremonies, religious rituals, warfare and communicating with gods and ancestors.

The Maya had numerous different musical instruments, including percussion and wind instruments such as trumpets, flutes and whistles. Various whistles, many of which are in the form of ceramic figurines, have been discovered at archaeological sites across Mesoamerica. These figurines usually depict humans, animals or even anthropomorphic beings, and lots of the whistles even have additional holes to allow for different tones to be played.

This particular figurine is in the Jaina style, named after the island that can be found off the coast of Campeche, Mexico. However, there is also evidence to suggest that this style of figurine may also have been produced in other areas of Mexico, such as Tabasco and Chiapas. Jaina-style figurines were made by pressing clay into moulds, while the more delicate features – for example the arms and legs – were made by hand. Amazingly, this figurine still has visible fingerprints on the headdress, right earflare and on the left side of the face.

The figurines from Jaina Island were found in burial sites and there are an estimated 20,000 graves on the island in total, but only around 1,000 of them have been excavated so far. Unfortunately, we do not know why whistle figurines were so common in the island graves. It is speculated that these figurines were used during funerals or that they were buried so that the deceased could carry them into the afterlife.

At first, these whistle figurines were viewed by scholars as pieces of Maya art rather than as musical instruments. Although we are still learning about how these musical instruments were used by the Maya, it is assumed that they were too delicate to be toys and that they must have served an important function.

MYTHICAL BEING

With his large belly and heavy jowls, this figurine might be connected to the 'Fat God', a Mesoamerican character that is not well understood. Scholars are unsure whether the 'Fat God' was a deity or not, and so he is also referred to as the 'Fat Man'.

COLOURFUL PAINT

Parts of the figurine appear to have been painted with 'Maya blue', a bright and unique pigment made by heating indigo and palygorskite. The centre of the face and the loincloth were painted red, while white paint was used on his pectoral and the circles on his feet.

THE OUTFIT

This figurine is wearing a warrior costume, with a bodysuit, belt, loincloth, large earflares and a ruffled collar. He also has a rectangular shield in his left hand, although his right arm is broken at the elbow.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

The whistle chamber can be found at the back of the figurine, with the mouthpiece located at the bottom. The chamber also serves as another support that helps to keep the figurine stood upright.

Image source: Metropolitan Museum of Art

MARVELLOUS MAYA

Ten real-life and mythical figures of this fascinating civilisation

KUKULCAN

Kukulcan, one of the most popular and important deities, is a feathered serpent god of the Yucatec Maya. Little is known about pre-Hispanic Kukulcan, however, he is related to Gucamatz, the creator god worshipped by the K'iche' Maya, as well as Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent deity of the Aztecs. There are many temples dedicated to him across northern Yucatán, for example, El Castillo at Chichén Itzá, where Kukulcan is said to return to Earth during the spring and autumn equinoxes.

Itzamna

Itzamna is one of the most important and wisest gods of the Maya pantheon. A creator god, he is usually depicted as an old man with a hooked nose and an elaborate headdress. Itzamna was known for his benevolence, helping to educate the Maya in various areas such as medicine, agriculture, art and science. He has also been credited with creating the Maya calendar and writing system, both of which he gifted to the people out of love. Itzamna was also very powerful and he could change himself into different forms, with many other Maya gods considered to be his manifestations.

YUM KAAX

Yum Kaax was the protector of plants and animals, for human use, as the deity for wildlife. He was popular with farmers, who called upon him to protect their lands, and he was also invoked by hunters to ensure a successful hunt. Although it was believed that he could guide the hunter's arrow, the arrow could hit the hunter if they had not paid proper respect to him. Nevertheless, Yum Kaax was still considered to be a benevolent god.

Image source: wiki/ŠJů

Ixchel's name translates into 'Lady Rainbow', and she is often called 'the rainbow goddess'

Ixchel

Ixchel is the Maya goddess of the moon, fertility, childbirth, medicine and weaving. She is also associated with war, thanks to images that show her wearing a skirt embroidered with a skull and crossbones. The most common depictions of Ixchel present her as an aged woman with serpents in her headdress, jaguar ears and carrying a water jug. She was an important goddess for pregnant women and those who wished to have children, and her shrine on the island of Cozumel was a popular pilgrimage site – in fact, many women still make pilgrimages to Ixchel's shrine today.

PAKAL THE GREAT

603-83

Pakal the Great, also known as K'inich Janaab' Pakal, was the ajaw (ruler) of the city-state Palenque. Ascending the throne at just 12 years old, Pakal ruled for 68 years until his death in 683, making his reign the longest of any Maya ruler. His long reign saw political stability and military success that cemented the rise of Palenque as a major power, with extensive building projects greatly expanding the city. Pakal's tomb was discovered at the Temple of Inscriptions in 1952, where the king was found buried inside an elaborate sarcophagus wearing a jade funerary mask and jewellery.

WAXAKLAJUUN UB'AAH K'AWIIL

C.8TH CENTURY

The 13th ruler of the city Copán, Waxaklajuun Ub'aah K'awiil is often referred to by his nickname '18 Rabbit'. He is remembered for his art patronage and the several structures and monuments that he built in Copán's ceremonial centre. In 724 he appointed K'ak' Tiliw Chan Yopaat as the ruler of Quirigua – a vassal of Copán – who later defeated Waxaklajuun Ub'aah K'awiil's forces in 783. The king was subsequently captured and executed, bringing his reign to an early end.

Image source: wiki/HJPD

Tecun Uman

c.1500-24

The last ruler of the K'iche Maya, it is said that Tecun Uman resisted the Spanish conquest before his defeat and untimely death at the hands of Spanish conquistador Pedro de Alvarado in 1524. Whether Tecun Uman truly existed or not remains a matter of debate, but the legend of him riding into battle while wearing a jewelled crown, quetzal feathers and accompanied by a quetzal bird – his spirit guide – still persists. In 1960, Uman was declared as the national hero of Guatemala and he continues to be celebrated in literature, dance and folktales today.

7x © Alamy

Chac has also appeared as a set of four gods, the Chacs, each one representing one of the cardinal directions: north, east, south and west

Chac

The deity of rain and lightning, Chac has appeared in the Preclassic, Classic and Postclassic periods of the Maya civilisation. He was responsible for maintaining water sources such as streams and waterfalls, and as a result he was also seen as a god of agriculture. Chac, who ruled over fields and crops, is often credited with bringing the maize plant to the Maya. On top of this, he is frequently cited as the protector of fisherman and warriors.

LADY K'ABEL

C.7TH CENTURY – C.8TH CENTURY

Lady K'abel was a queen regnant and a member of the Snake dynasty that ruled the ancient city of Calakmul. She married K'inich Bahlam II, a nobleman of lesser status, and they together ruled over the vassal town of El Perú-Waka. Lady K'abel held the title of Ix Kaloomte ('Lady Supreme Warlord') which has led to speculation that she might have led troops into battle. In this surviving depiction of her, the queen wears an elaborate costume that reflects her status.

Image source: Cleveland Museum of Art

LADY K'AB'AL XOOK

C.7TH CENTURY – C.8TH CENTURY

The principal wife and aunt of King Itzamnaaj Bahlam II, Lady K'ab'al is believed to have been one of the most powerful women of the Maya. She is featured in the *Yaxchiln Lintels* that depict her performing a series of rituals with her husband, which makes her one of the few women to be depicted in ancient Maya carvings. In this image of *Lintel 24*, Lady K'ab'al Xook performs a bloodletting ritual, pulling a thorny rope through her tongue.

Q&A with...

DR MEAGHAN PEURAMAKI-BROWN

Uncovering the achievements and misconceptions of the Maya civilisation

You're the principal investigator of the Stann Creek Regional Archaeology Project (SCRAP) in Belize. What has your research in this region revealed about the Maya?
The research program's goals are to understand the ancient Maya peoples of East-Central Belize, which is considered a distinct subregion of the lowlands and has been subject to little archaeological investigation. The uniqueness of this part of the Maya world is due primarily to its location along the eastern slopes of the Maya Mountains. This section of the mountains is mainly of igneous and metamorphic geologies, and so there is little-to-no limestone. The resulting environments are quite different from most of the lowlands, where life was (and is) situated atop the Yucatan Peninsula's karstic shelf, and the Maya constructed their world with limestone and its by-products. In much of East-Central Belize, granite provided the building blocks of settled life. Additionally, settlement layouts and locations differed from neighbouring regions, as did architectural styles. Our research at the ancient town of Alabama, which archaeologists named in the 1970s after a nearby village (original name unknown), is attempting to further document the diversity of lifeways represented by ancient Maya peoples. 'The Maya' is a misnomer in that we know they consisted then (and today) of multiple related languages and various identities, be they ethnic or other forms. This diversity is an essential topic of investigation in this region, considered a borderland or frontier zone of the Maya world. Additionally, Alabama appears to have boomed during a time of general urban decline in much of the lowlands, and we're working to figure out why.

We know that the Maya civilisation was not unified, so how did the different city-states interact with each other?
It was not unified in the sense of an empire, but it was certainly well connected. At an elite and royal level, this connection appeared in the form of official visits, occasional over-lordship, marriages, warfare, and general ideological affiliations.

"Maya subsistence practices and house construction techniques are innovative and dynamic"

In a broader sense, the Maya world was well-connected by trade routes and communication corridors, which continued well into modern times. More recently, we have a better understanding of additional physical connections between settlements and their populations through the use of Lidar, which has demonstrated that the Maya connected many of their cities – big and small –by causeways.

The Maya created a calendar system that was both accurate and complex. How did it develop and why does it continue to fascinate us?
The origins of the various calendars (e.g., Tzolk'in, Haab', Long-Count) that make up the system are not entirely understood. They seem to at least partially have their beginnings with the Olmec of the Gulf Coast region of Mesoamerica during the Middle Preclassic (c.1000-400 BCE). I think the similarities with our calendars today are fascinating. The combination of multiple cyclical calendars (such as our lunar months and solar years) and a linear year count (eg 2020, 2021, 2022) would have been familiar to the ancient Maya. When you understand the logic and mechanics behind these systems, their similarities aren't surprising, as they are both based on common observable natural phenomena. It's riveting to learn about such systems' origins and to appreciate that ancient peoples were concerned with something as abstract as time. The Maya system is arguably the most sophisticated in the Americas – or, at least, has the best-preserved record – so I think people are drawn to it. It's also incredible how parts of the calendrical system survive in many Maya communities up to this day, which demonstrates its persistence, accuracy, and utility over thousands of years.

In your opinion, are there any achievements of the Maya that don't receive enough recognition?
I think the general day-to-day of ancient life – beyond the realm of elite lifeways – is hugely underappreciated by the general public and under-represented in coverage about Maya peoples. I don't think it's fair to say that it's understudied; it just doesn't have the same flash or mystery as palaces and temple platforms so it doesn't appear in glossy magazines or documentaries about archaeology and history. What is so unique about the ancient everyday is that much of it continues in Maya communities today, such as diverse subsistence practices and

Dr Peuramaki-Brown is an archaeologist and associate professor at Athabasca University, specialising in the complex societies of Mesoamerica. She is also the principal investigator of the Stann Creek Regional Archaeology Project (SCRAP) in Belize, and she has worked at sites in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Antigua-Barbuda, Finland and Canada.

Headshot source: Stann Creek Regional Archaeology Project

Caracol, a large ancient Maya archaeological site in Belize
© Getty Images

house construction techniques. These are incredibly innovative, dynamic, and well-suited to the various lowland environments, and represent over 3,000 years of development and resilience.

Are there any misconceptions about the Maya civilisation that still persist today?

One of the biggest misconceptions is the notion of the Maya 'Collapse'. The 'Collapse' represents a length of time toward the end of the Classic Period – labelled the 'Terminal Classic' (c.800-900 CE) – during which the institution of divine kingship waned, and many cities of the Southern and Central Lowlands started losing their populations for various reasons. People picked up and moved elsewhere. Some people may have headed north to where cities continued with new leadership forms, or some stayed on at places such as Lamanai in Belize that survived through the Postclassic and beyond. We also see smaller communities such as Alabama appearing that may represent new settlements established by migrating peoples. Some oral histories of Maya peoples today even suggest many simply left urban life to live in the forests. The word 'collapse' is often taken as meaning the total loss of Maya cultures, despite over six million Maya peoples and an enduring legacy that still thrives today.

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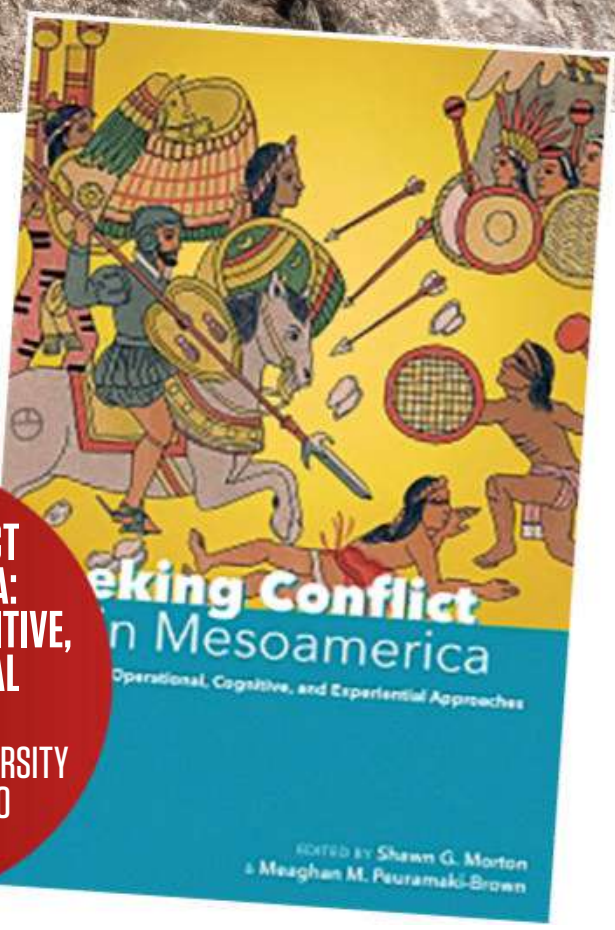


Places to Explore

RUINS OF THE MAYA CIVILISATION

Archeologists have discovered amazing temples, palaces and other ancient Maya ruins across Central America

© Getty Images

1 PALENQUE
MEXICO

Mexico's most famous ruin is Chichen Itza and, while it should be on your must-see list, there are countless other equally, if not more, impressive Maya ruins. One of them is the ancient, wealthy city of Palenque, which was originally known as Lakamha.

Palenque's limestone architecture is stunning and led to the ruins being made a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The remains date from 226 BCE to 799 and were discovered by Europeans in the late 18th century. Importantly, they are well conserved despite centuries of being covered by dense jungle. As if to add to the mystique, eight rivers wind through this area too.

You can enjoy the hieroglyphics inside the nine-levelled Temple of the Inscriptions – the largest Mesoamerican stepped pyramid, built by the first son of legendary ruler K'inich Janaab' Pakal. Visitors can also see The Tomb of the Red Queen inside Temple XIII containing the remains of the noblewoman Lady Ix Tz'akbu Ajaw.

The National Park of Palenque is open daily between 8am and 5pm. Adult entry costs 75 pesos (£2.70) plus 35 pesos (£1.25) for park entry. palenquepark.com

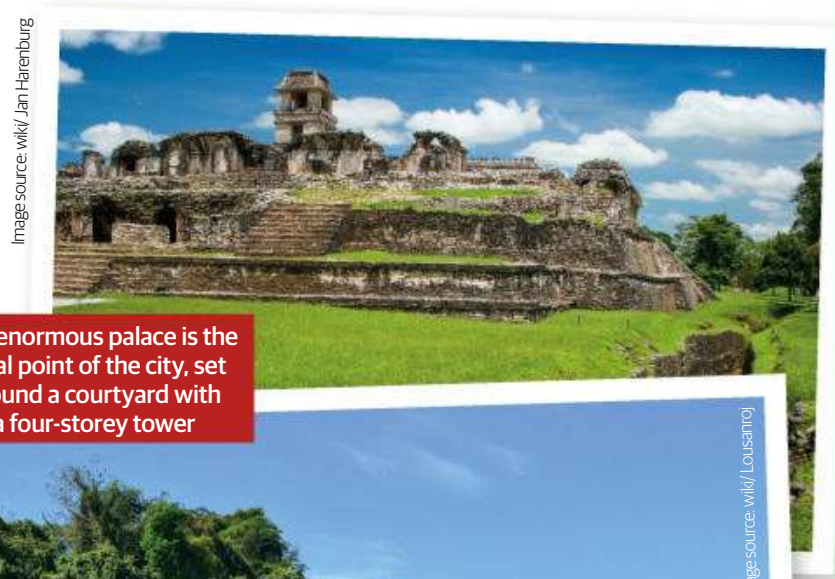


Image source: wiki/ Jan Harenburg

The enormous palace is the focal point of the city, set around a courtyard with a four-storey tower

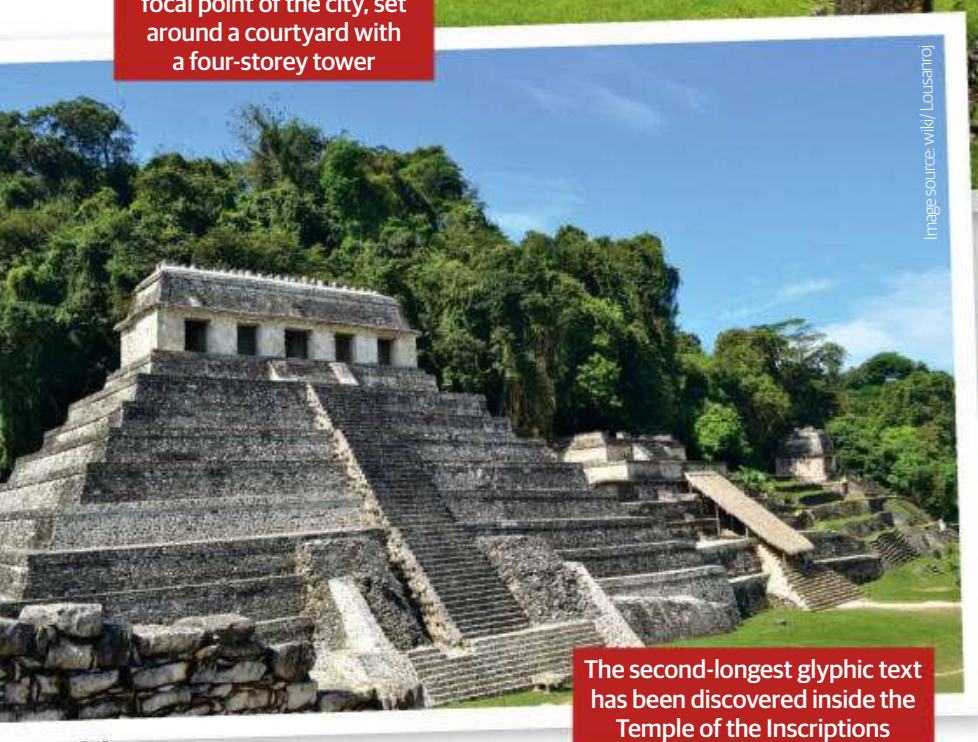


Image source: wiki/ Lousanroj

The second-longest glyphic text has been discovered inside the Temple of the Inscriptions

2 COPÁN RUINAS
HONDURAS

Although it's a relatively small site, the Classic-period kingdom of Copán in Honduras is nevertheless worth a visit thanks to the 80 or so processional stelae that are located there. The tall, sculpted pieces of single stone are carved with the images of royal ancestors from between the 5th and 9th centuries – their images are on one side and an explanation of their life on the other. You'll see expressions of the Maya's religious beliefs in a detailed, artistic manner, making for a stunning, symbolic ancient exhibition.

The stelae are situated around a large plaza and they include one depicting Uaxaclajuun Ub'aah K'awiil, a past ruler known as Eighteen Rabbit who had been captured and beheaded by a rival. The area also boasts an acropolis built for Copan's last ruler, Yax Pasaj Chan Yopaat, as well as the second-largest ball court in Central America. Perhaps most famous is the temple-pyramid, Structure 26. It includes the longest discovered Mayan text and its stairs are etched with hieroglyphics.

Open daily between 8am and 4pm, you'll pay around 300 pesos (£10). copanhonduras.org/en/

There are 1,260 hieroglyphic symbols on the 63 remaining steps of the stairway leading into this temple

Image source: wiki/ Peter Andersen

El Castillo was used as a navigation aid by passing ships.

3 TULUM
MEXICO

The walled city of Tulum attracts the third-largest number of visitors of all the Maya ruins in Mexico and it's easy to see why. Perched atop a cliff on the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula, it boasts relatively unspoiled architecture, made almost entirely of limestone. This site is also in the most spectacular of locations, overlooking the Caribbean Sea, meaning it's also a mere whisker away from a beach of soft white sand.

Tulum's heyday as a city-state was in the 13th and 14th centuries but it was a focus for trade and religion for a couple of hundred years either side of that period. As a port, it served the nearby city of Coba, and jade, cotton, copper, food and turquoise were among the many goods that passed through.

There are three key buildings here: the imposing pyramid of El Castillo with its Toltec-inspired architecture and wide external staircase; the Temple of the Frescoes with its stunning interior murals and stucco figures on the exterior; and the single room that comprises the Temple of the Descending God. Tulum is also notable for being one of the last of the Maya cities to be built and one of the last to be inhabited: indeed, Tulum continued to be a home for the Maya after the Spanish began their conquest.

The ruins are open daily between 8am and 5pm and entry costs 80 pesos (£2.80). You can also pay for a hired guide.

4 LAMANAI
BELIZE

This important Maya city – one of the few to have retained its original name – is significant because of its long history of inhabitation: people began to occupy the area as early as the 16th century BCE, although it wasn't until the 4th century BCE that it rose to prominence, thanks to the Maya.

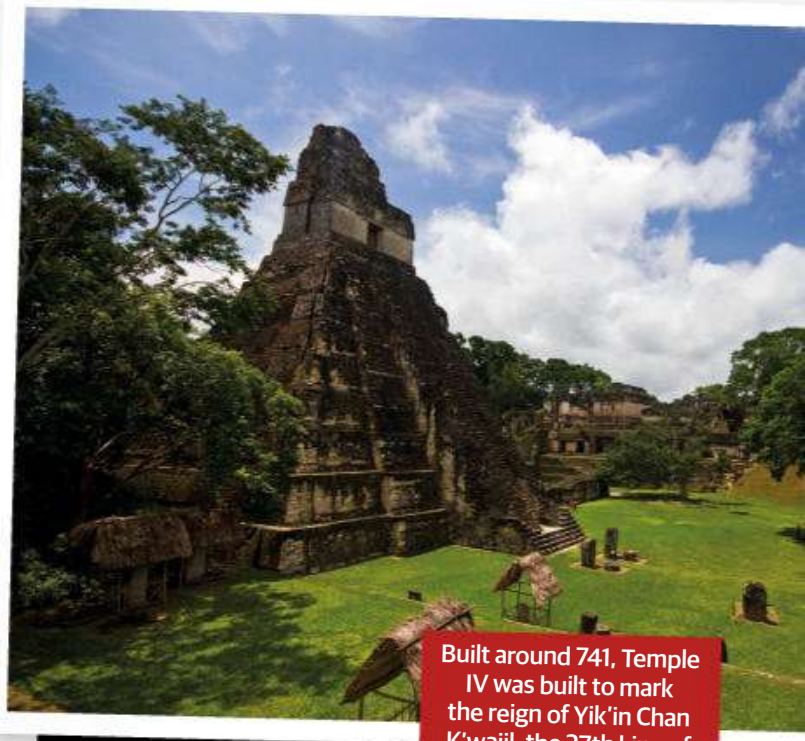
They were responsible for architecture such as the limestone High Temple which, at 33 metres, is the third-tallest of all Maya structures in Belize. There is also the stepped-pyramid Jaguar Temple, a lot of which is now underground, and the Mask Temple, which continued to be modified until about 1300 and is notable for its two four-metre high mask carvings, the second of which was uncovered just 10 years ago.

One of the two images of an ancient Maya king adorning the Mask Temple

Image source: wiki/ Alma Ayon

There's a museum here, too, located in the building that forms the start of your adventure. As well as giving details of the area's history, you can view pottery and jewellery and get a close-up view of the original Stela 9 – which was the first monument found in Lamanai with readable hieroglyphic text.

Open daily between 8am and 5pm, with entry costing 5 Belize Dollars (£1.80) ravelbelize.org/lamanai



Built around 741, Temple IV was built to mark the reign of Yik'in Chan K'waiil, the 27th king of the Tikal dynasty

2x © Getty Images

5 TIKAL
GUATEMALA

Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1979, Tikal National Park (which was established in the 1950s) is home to one of the Maya's greatest and grandest of cities. Nestling within dense rainforest, Tikal was inhabited as early as 400 BCE as a collection of small villages, but it rose to prominence from 100 CE and became particularly prominent around 600 when as many as 60,000 people lived in and around the area.

As was typical of such a metropolis, Tikal had palaces, temples, homes, stucco-surfaced plazas and large stone courts for playing of the Maya ball game. Indeed, there are six main temple pyramids, with the tallest – Temple IV – measuring 65 metres, making it the tallest standing pre-Columbian structure in the Americas. You can climb the steps to reach the shrines at the top of these temples. The views of the surrounding area are spectacular.

There are also large complexes known collectively as the acropoli, with buildings erected on top of burial chambers. The tombs of Tikal rulers have been uncovered beneath North Acropolis, for instance. There is also evidence of the very first settlers which, in combination with the Mundo Perdido ceremonial complex, have revealed much about the Maya people. However, it is still not known exactly why the Maya abandoned Tikal in the 10th century. The last stela is dated 889.

Tikal National Park is open daily between 6am and 5pm with tickets costing 150GTQ (£14). tikalnationalpark.org

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Illustration by: Joe Cummings

BRITAIN'S WARRIOR QUEEN

Boudica

Discover how her Iceni uprising almost crushed the Roman invasion

Written by Tom Garner

Sometime in the early 3rd century, the Roman historian Cassius Dio reflected on the mental state of Emperor Nero in the year 60 CE. The notorious Nero, who had already ordered the murder of his mother, was now trying to present himself as a musical genius. His public performances were reputedly so bad that audiences openly laughed at him, but he had thousands of soldiers to lead rounds of applause. All this was reportedly done to "celebrate the shaving of his beard; and in behalf of his preservation and the continuance of his power".

This dangerously unstable ruler may have been mad but he held sway over the huge Roman Empire. Nevertheless, Dio recorded that this deranged imperial hubris received a severe shock from the west on the far edges of Nero's domains: "While this sort of child's play was going on in Rome, a terrible disaster occurred in Britain. Two cities were sacked, eighty thousand of the Romans and of their allies perished, and the island was lost to Rome. Moreover, all this ruin was brought upon the Romans by a woman, a fact which in itself caused them the greatest shame."

The woman who caused the Romans "the greatest shame" was Boudica, Queen of the Iceni. Although she was not Britain's first warrior queen, Boudica was the first British female ruler to be historically recorded in any detail – and her story was dramatic in the extreme. An epic tale of vengeance, destruction and bloodshed, Boudica almost ejected Roman forces from Britain in a great uprising during c.60-61 CE. Dio was wrong to state that Rome temporarily lost Britain to the rebellious Britons and their warrior queen but she definitely came closer than most. The question is: how close?

Claudian conquest

In 60 CE, Britain had only been under Roman rule for 17 years since the invasion of Emperor Claudius in 43 CE. Apart from Ireland, this was the western limits of the known world for the Romans, and their actual rule was then limited to what is now central and southern England. In 60 CE an informal military frontier existed from Lincolnshire in the East Midlands down to Devon in the southwest, while the rest of Britain consisted of free Celtic tribes. Many occupied Britons initially welcomed Roman rule or capitulated without a fight, including the Iceni tribe.

The Iceni lived in what is now Norfolk and parts of Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. They were already known to Julius Caesar when he invaded Britain in 54

BELOW The Snettisham Great Torc was discovered on former Iceni territory in Norfolk. Dating from c.150-50 BCE, it has been speculated that Boudica would've worn something similar

© Getty Images

BCE, when he referred to them as the "Ceni Magni" in his *Commentaries*. It's believed they were divided into several royal clans or subkingdoms, and one of their centres was a place near modern-day Norwich called Venta Icenorum ('Market of the Iceni'). They minted coins and made metalwork and fine jewellery, but were comparatively isolated and less wealthy than more southern British tribes.

Although they had initially peacefully submitted to the Romans in 43 CE, the Iceni subsequently launched a minor revolt in 50 CE. This event prompted the Romans to disarm the tribe and an uneasy relationship existed for the next decade. Despite the tension, one Iceni king called Prasutagus allied himself with the Romans and sought accommodation with them. When he died in c.60-61 CE he named both the Emperor Nero and his two daughters as his co-heirs.

According to the Roman historian Cornelius Tacitus, Prasutagus believed that this "act of deference would place his kingdom and household beyond the risk of injury. The result was contrary – so much so that his kingdom was pillaged by centurions, his household made slaves; as though they had been prizes of war".

"Although they had initially peacefully submitted to the Romans in 43 CE, the Iceni subsequently launched a minor revolt in 50 CE"

The Romans clearly took advantage of the power vacuum left by Prasutagus's death and his queen dramatically entered Tacitus's history as the victim of a craven assault: "As a beginning, his wife Boudica was subjected to the lash and his daughters violated: all the chief men of the Icenians were stripped of their family estates, and the relatives of the king were treated as slaves."

The Romans' severe ill-treatment of Boudica, her daughters and the Iceni nobility was to have grave consequences. Tacitus recorded that after these violations the Iceni rose up under Boudica's leadership and joined forces with neighbouring tribes to restore their freedom: "Impelled by this outrage and the dread of worse to come – for they had now been reduced to the status of a province – they flew to arms, and incited to rebellion the Trinovantes and others, who, not yet broken by servitude, had entered into a secret and treasonable compact to resume their independence."

Of the two Roman historians who chronicled what happened next – Tacitus and Cassius Dio – it is the former who is the most important. Dio was born approximately 100 years after the Boudican Revolt and was heavily influenced by Tacitus, although he may have had access to other sources that are now lost. The value of Tacitus is that his *Annals* were written half-a-century after the revolt and he was also the son-in-law of Gnaeus Julius Agricola, the governor of Britain.

Iceni Icon

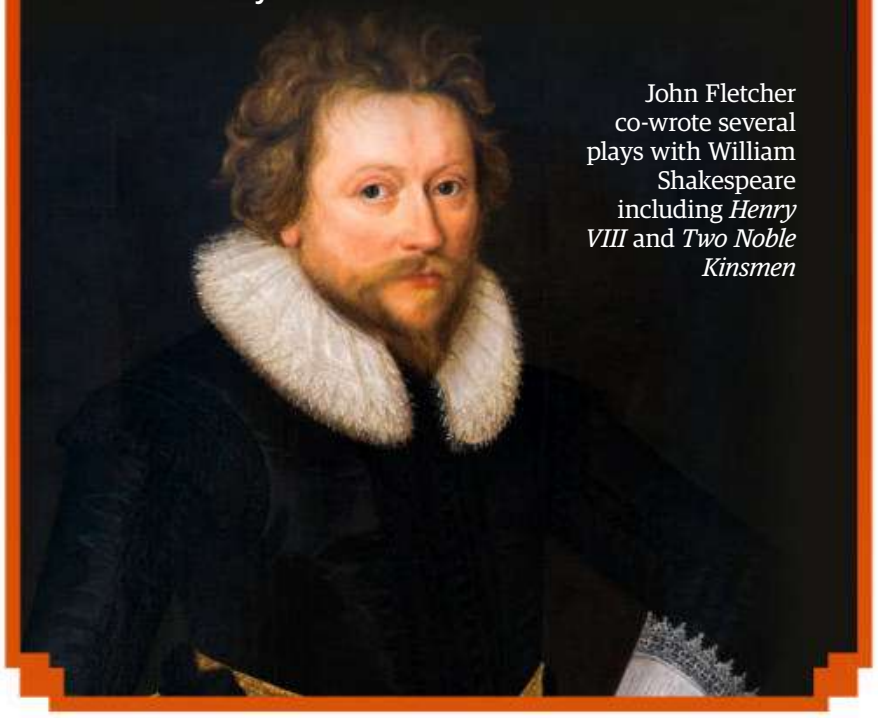
How Boudica's legend was built through literature, theatre, music, art and politics

Boudica has never been forgotten by the British. Her memory endured before her legacy was properly memorialised from the 16th century. The poet Sir Edmund Spenser called her "Bunduca" in a poem from 1590 called *Ruines of Time*. He praised her as a "victorious Conqueress" who overcame what he viewed as "Women's Weakness" to defeat the Romans.

Sexism (not to mention historical inaccuracy) was also displayed by the Jacobean playwright John Fletcher in a play he wrote called *Bonduca* in 1613. Despite being the title character, Boudica is a secondary role compared to the male protagonist Caratach (Caratacus). To add insult to injury, she is depicted as unintelligent and arrogant. Boudica fared no better in John Milton's 1670 *History of Britain* where he claimed that the Britons were unruly barbarians who were led by a "distracted woman".

Boudica's posthumous fortunes only improved during the 18th and 19th centuries. A popular 1695 song by Henry Purcell called *Britons, Strike Home!* was based on Bonduca and became a patriotic tune that was sung during conflicts that included the Napoleonic Wars. For a woman who rebelled against imperial aggression, Boudica ironically became an iconic figure at the height of the British Empire. Several Royal Navy ships were named after her and Prince Albert encouraged the construction of her statue in Westminster in the 1850s.

She also became a hero for the Suffragettes. A Suffragette pamphlet from 1909 explained how "this heroic figure... represents a type of the 'eternal feminine' – the guardian of the hearth, the avenger of its wrongs upon the defacer and the despoiler." It is an image that has endured well into the 21st century – regardless of the historical reality.



John Fletcher co-wrote several plays with William Shakespeare including *Henry VIII* and *Two Noble Kinsmen*

BELOW Suetonius Paulinus's suppression of the druids on Anglesey diverted Roman military resources into Wales, which inadvertently allowed Boudica's Revolt to gather momentum

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Agricola fought against Boudica as a junior officer in the Roman Army, which makes it likely that Tacitus was told about events first-hand from someone who was there. Although he was biased against Boudica, Tacitus was, in his own words: "Dedicated to writing history without anger or bias." We can therefore view his history with a reasonable degree of accuracy, albeit alongside a significant dose of scepticism.

Of Boudica herself, virtually nothing is known of her life before the events of c.60-61 CE. Dio said (with an unfortunate amount of sexism) that she was "a Briton woman of the royal family and possessed of greater intelligence than often belongs to women". He also described of her appearance: "She was very tall, in appearance most terrifying, the glance of her eye most fierce; her voice harsh. A great mass of the tawniest (reddest) hair fell down to her hips. Around her neck was a large golden necklace, and she always wore a tunic of many colours over which a thick mantle was fastened with a brooch. This was her invariable attire."

Dio's image of a formidable warrior queen entirely chimed with her standing as the leader of a vengeful revolt. After her family's assault, she was now poised to lead the Iceni, Trinovantes and others against the symbol of Roman power in Britain: Colchester.

"Citadel of tyranny"

Located in what is now Essex, Colchester was known as Camulodunum by the Romans. It had been a significant British settlement but was occupied and became a prosperous town that was settled by Roman Army veterans and their native-born wives. Colchester was dominated by the Temple of Claudius, which was then the largest in Britain and included a bronze equestrian statue of the old emperor. Even Tacitus described Colchester as "a citadel of an eternal tyranny". However, it had no substantial defences.

When the revolt broke out, the main Roman military forces under the command of Governor Gaius Suetonius Paulinus were far away fighting druids on the island of Anglesey off the northwest coast of Wales. Colchester's veterans hurriedly constructed defences around the temple but Boudica's new British force surrounded them and razed the town to the ground. The veterans received little support from Nero's procurator (representative) Catus Decianus and they endured a two-day siege inside the temple. They were ultimately "carried by storm" and massacred along with the rest of the town's population.

Colchester began a bloodthirsty trend for Boudica's revolt as the rebellious Britons destroyed all Roman forces and settlements that stood in their way. Chelmsford (Caesaromagus) was torched and a major victory was won by the

ABOVE The Roman Vaults in Colchester Castle are the remains of the Temple of Claudius and are the only surviving rooms that directly witnessed Boudica's Revolt

OPPOSITE Cornelius Tacitus's account of the Boudican Revolt is the most important source of what happened

Britons in an engagement known as the Battle of Camulodunum. A relief army of the 9th Legion commanded by Quintus Petillius Cerialis had attempted to relieve Colchester but according to Tacitus, "The victorious Britons routed the legion and slaughtered the infantry to a man."

Cerialis escaped but the damage to Roman prestige was enormous. His force had been a large vexillation (detachment) of 2,500 men, with approximately 2,000 being killed by the Britons. Boudica's victory at this unknown location in southeast England could be regarded as a miniature version of the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest in 9 CE when Germanic tribes destroyed three Roman legions.

The Battle of Camulodunum forced Paulinus to personally return through enemy-held territory to assess the situation from the busy settlement of London (Londinium). With Colchester and a third of one of his legions destroyed, the future of Roman Britain was hanging in the balance thanks to Boudica's uprising. Paulinus made the difficult decision to leave London to the mercy of the Britons and left to regroup his army in the north so that the Romans could defeat Boudica at a later date.

London's burning

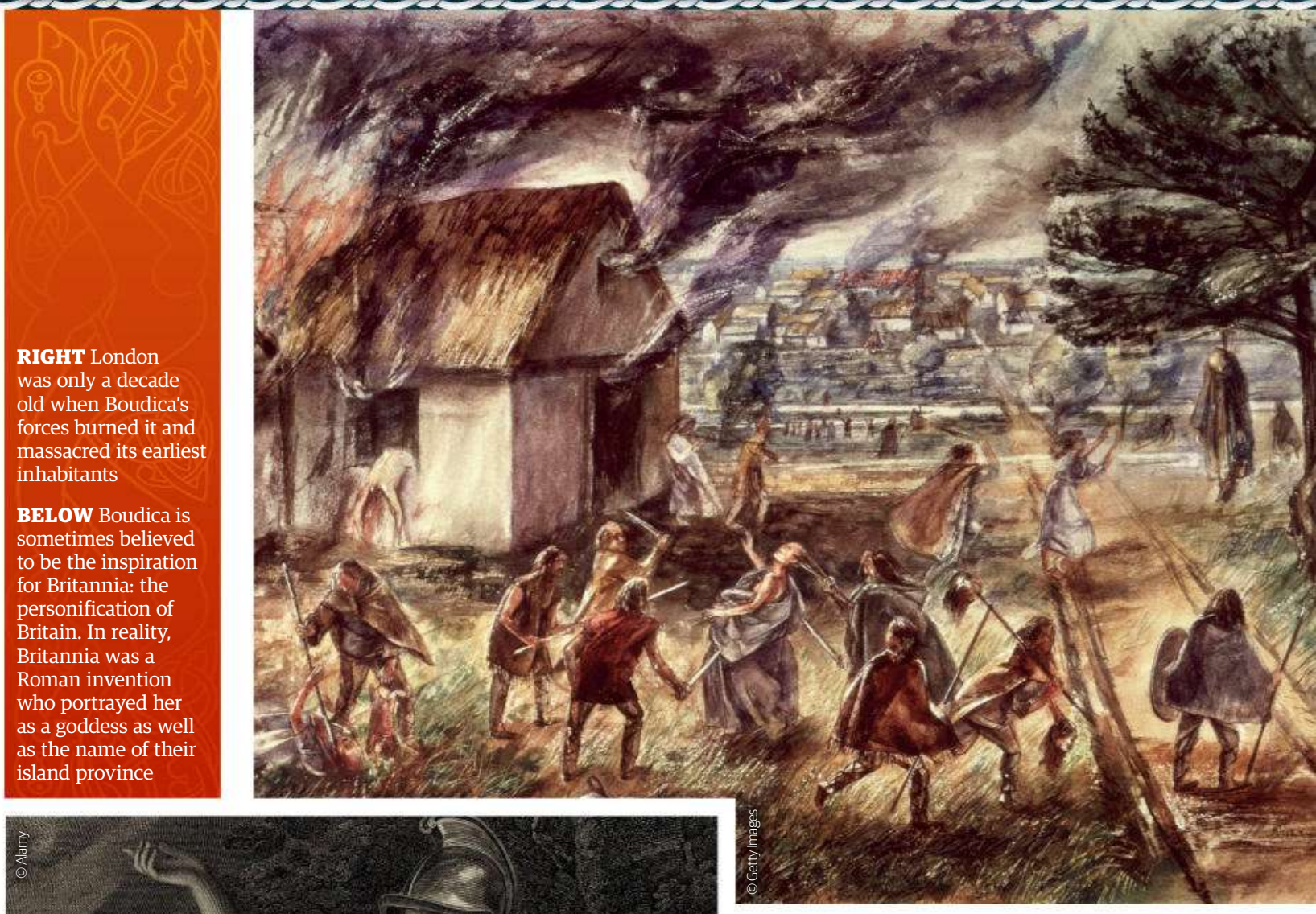
London was only a decade old when Boudica's forces descended upon it. Already a successful commercial Roman port, it was (like Colchester) largely undefended and militarily vulnerable. Other British tribes had now swelled the ranks of Boudica's army and most of London's earliest inhabitants fled before the gathering storm.

The settlement was comprehensively destroyed in a firestorm and the Londoners who remained were reputedly subjected to excessive violence. Dio gave a lurid account of how the Britons committed, "bestial [atrocities]," by mutilating women, pillaging, committing sacrilege at Roman religious sites and conducting themselves with, "wanton behaviour."

This may be a melodramatic interpretation but it is true that the sack of London was a traumatic event. Tacitus described how, "the enemy neither took captive nor sold into captivity; there was none of the other commerce of war; he was hasty with slaughter and the gibbet, with arson and the cross (crucifixion)."

RIGHT London was only a decade old when Boudica's forces burned it and massacred its earliest inhabitants

BELOW Boudica is sometimes believed to be the inspiration for Britannia: the personification of Britain. In reality, Britannia was a Roman invention who portrayed her as a goddess as well as the name of their island province



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"Dio's image of a formidable warrior queen entirely chimed with her standing as the leader of a vengeful revolt"

Boudica moved on from London with her forces inflicting similar destruction on St Albans (Verulamium) in Hertfordshire. The Romans claimed that the Britons deliberately avoided enemy forts and garrisons and were primarily motivated by loot. The truth of this statement cannot be ascertained but this bitterly biased perspective fails to acknowledge that Boudica had inflicted a severe blow to Roman power in Britain. Tacitus admitted that the combined destruction of Colchester, London, St Albans and elsewhere caused the deaths of approximately 70,000 Roman citizens and their British allies. For a land with a much smaller population than the United Kingdom today this was a catastrophic blow for the Romans. The triumphant Boudica now effectively controlled southeast Britain and only the army of Paulinus stood in her way.

A lost battlefield

British history hung on a knife-edge at this point between the ascendant Boudica and the embattled Paulinus who was licking Roman wounds to the north. The revolt had spread out from the southeast with

The Fenwick Treasure includes three gold armlets, various items of silverware, coins and even a small jewellery box containing gold earrings and finger-rings

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Earth, Fire & Treasure

There is abundant archaeological evidence for Boudica's Revolt

Tracing historical figures and events from the Ancient World can be extremely difficult but in the case of Boudica's Revolt there is plentiful archaeological evidence, particularly in Colchester. It was discovered that the Britons desecrated the Roman cemetery and two tombstones of soldiers were found to have been deliberately damaged, with their faces symbolically mutilated. In 2014, Roman coins and jewellery were excavated in Colchester's High Street. Known as the 'Fenwick Treasure', the hoard was discovered beneath a soil layer of destruction dating from c.60-61 CE. It had been buried for safekeeping in a small pit under a house that had been burned down. Poignantly, the treasure was never recovered and human bones were also found on the site.

Colchester town centre also has a layer of red and black soil approximately one metre thick dating from the time of the revolt. A similar layer exists beneath the modern City of London where the Britons also destroyed the Roman settlement. Both Colchester and London were razed to the ground, with the red layers being oxidised iron that melted during the fires. The red and black deposits of soil also represent the colours of clay that was used to build the timber structures. Such was the apparent destruction that the clays turned into a solid mass. It is a stark indication that the Britons intended to totally destroy the new colonies, and fire-damaged coins depicting Emperor Claudius have also been found in London.

It is Claudius who represents perhaps the most famous indication of the revolt. In 1907, a bronze head of the emperor was unearthed at Rendham, Suffolk. Discovered on what was once Iceni land, the head had formed part of a life-size statue but it was later decapitated. One theory is that the head was originally part of the equestrian statue of Claudius that was toppled in Colchester and taken away as a trophy. This can never be confirmed but the head is a tantalising symbol of the violent challenge to Roman authority.

The tombstone of Italian centurion Marcus Facilis was broken in half while his nose was knocked off

© Getty Images

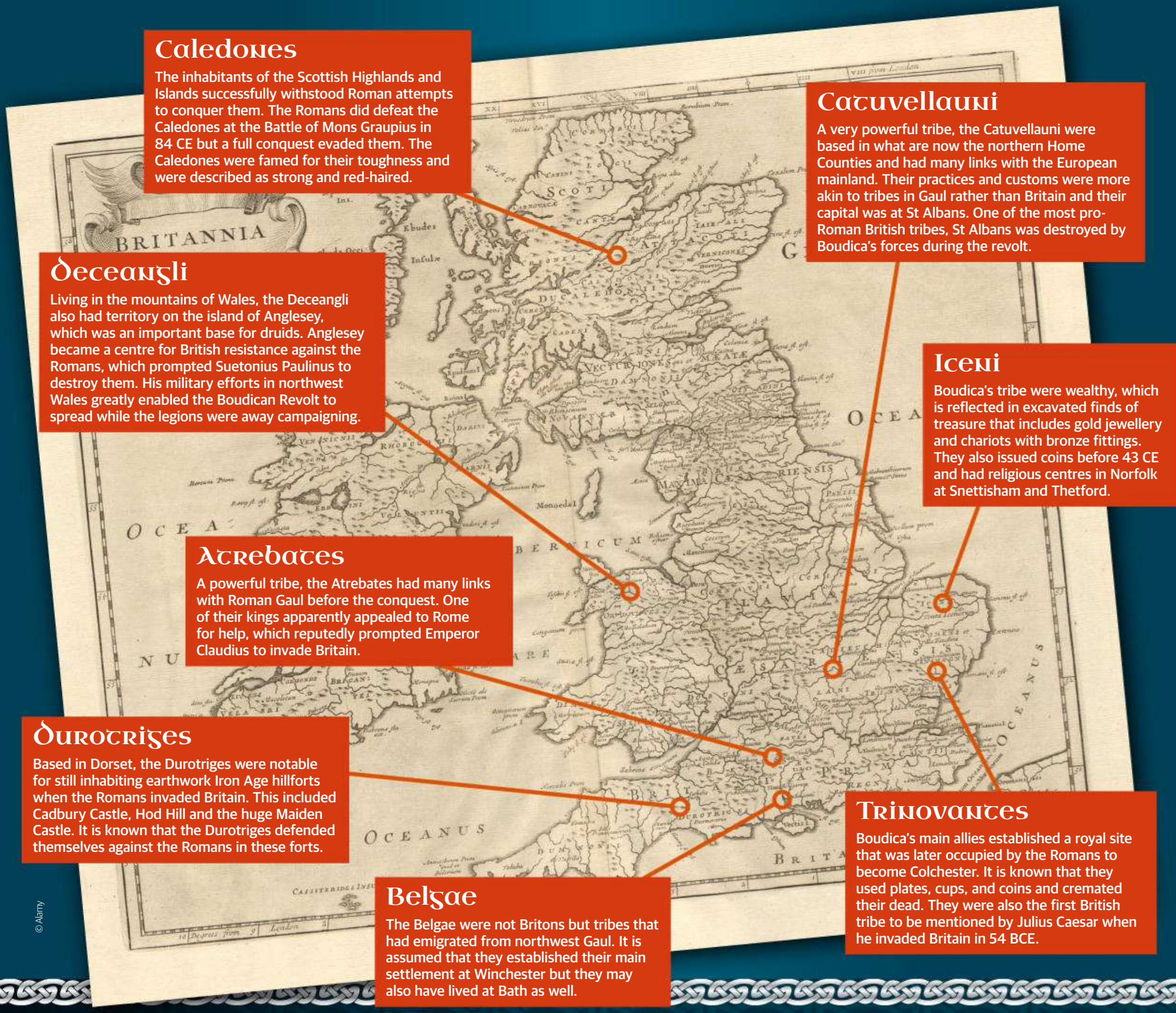
This tombstone commemorates the Roman cavalry officer Longinus who is depicted riding over a conquered Briton. His face was smashed by one of Boudica's followers although the Briton was left undamaged

British Tribes

Boudica's Iceni were just one of dozens of multicultural tribes that inhabited Britain at the time of the Roman Conquest

Britain in the early 1st century CE did not consist of England, Wales and Scotland as we know it today. Instead, it comprised many Celtic tribes that numbered 27 at the very least. These were not even a homogenous group that were split on political lines. The tribes were also culturally, militarily and perhaps even religiously divided. Some had extensive links to the Roman Empire and kept up with cultural trends from abroad. Others were more isolated and clung to more traditional customs.

Geography largely determined how pro-Roman or not a tribe could be at the time of the conquest with what is now southeast England having the most links to the empire. This suggests an early north-south divide, with some Britons in the far north successfully resisting the Romans while their southern counterparts often willingly assimilated. What is most fascinating is that the 'Britons' were actually a multicultural people, with some tribes being immigrants from Continental Europe. This proves that Britain has always been an island where different peoples have lived side by side for millennia.



Caledones

The inhabitants of the Scottish Highlands and Islands successfully withstood Roman attempts to conquer them. The Romans did defeat the Caledones at the Battle of Mons Graupius in 84 CE but a full conquest evaded them. The Caledones were famed for their toughness and were described as strong and red-haired.

Catuvellauni

A very powerful tribe, the Catuvellauni were based in what are now the northern Home Counties and had many links with the European mainland. Their practices and customs were more akin to tribes in Gaul rather than Britain and their capital was at St Albans. One of the most pro-Roman British tribes, St Albans was destroyed by Boudica's forces during the revolt.

Deceangli

Living in the mountains of Wales, the Deceangli also had territory on the island of Anglesey, which was an important base for druids. Anglesey became a centre for British resistance against the Romans, which prompted Suetonius Paulinus to destroy them. His military efforts in northwest Wales greatly enabled the Boudican Revolt to spread while the legions were away campaigning.

Iceni

Boudica's tribe were wealthy, which is reflected in excavated finds of treasure that includes gold jewellery and chariots with bronze fittings. They also issued coins before 43 CE and had religious centres in Norfolk at Snettisham and Thetford.

Atrebates

A powerful tribe, the Atrebates had many links with Roman Gaul before the conquest. One of their kings apparently appealed to Rome for help, which reputedly prompted Emperor Claudius to invade Britain.

Durotriges

Based in Dorset, the Durotriges were notable for still inhabiting earthwork Iron Age hillforts when the Romans invaded Britain. This included Cadbury Castle, Hod Hill and the huge Maiden Castle. It is known that the Durotriges defended themselves against the Romans in these forts.

Belgae

The Belgae were not Britons but tribes that had emigrated from northwest Gaul. It is assumed that they established their main settlement at Winchester but they may also have lived at Bath as well.

Trinovantes

Boudica's main allies established a royal site that was later occupied by the Romans to become Colchester. It is known that they used plates, cups, and coins and cremated their dead. They were also the first British tribe to be mentioned by Julius Caesar when he invaded Britain in 54 BCE.

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Britons attacking Roman forces in places as disparate as Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Somerset. Boudica's personal control over her own uprising is impossible to establish but she was clearly determined to directly meet Paulinus in battle.

In one sense, she had no choice. The Roman Empire was the greatest power in Europe and if their presence in Britain was not immediately removed then she would be defeated – either by Paulinus or by a later punitive expedition. Boudica seemingly decided to meet Paulinus in battle as soon as possible because the odds appeared in her favour.

locations, suggested by archaeologist Dr Graham Webster in the 1970s, is the village of Mancetter in Warwickshire. Tacitus described how Paulinus "chose a position approached by a narrow defile, closed in at the rear by a forest". This area also had an "open plain" that "extended without any danger from ambushes".

Mancetter is near to what was then the Roman military frontier and the village contains both woods and extensive fields that are still crossed by Watling Street. Archaeological evidence has uncovered a Roman Army base nearby as well as military coinage and the remains of

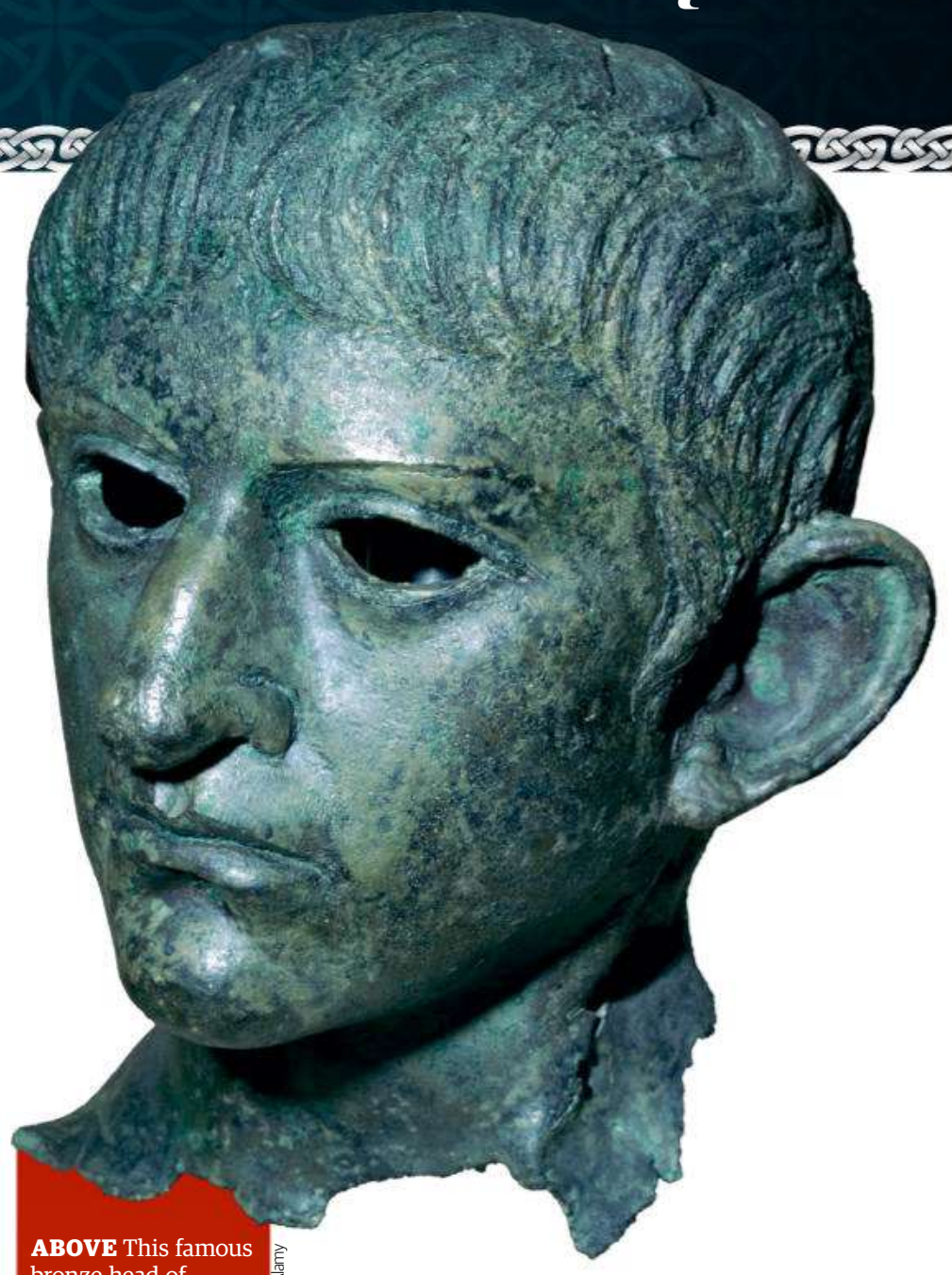
"Boudica now effectively controlled southeast Britain and only the army of Paulinus stood in her way"

The location of the battlefield for this fateful clash is unknown but historians believe it was fought somewhere along – or near to – an ancient highway known as Watling Street. Originally a British route that ran northwest from Dover in Kent to Wroxeter in Shropshire, Watling Street was paved by the Romans shortly after their invasion in 43 CE. It is supposed that Boudica followed Paulinus after he left London to rejoin his forces that were returning from Wales.

The opposing armies could have met anywhere along this road, with suggested sites being proposed in the Midlands or the northwest. One of the most intriguing

legionary and cavalry armour. What is even more intriguing is a potential glimpse of the British military activities in the etymology of 'Mancetter' itself.

By the time the British and Roman armies met, Boudica commanded a numerically superior force. Tacitus said that the British were gathered "in unprecedented numbers", while Dio gave a figure of 230,000 warriors. This statistic is perhaps unlikely but the British certainly greatly outnumbered the Romans. Paulinus only commanded 10,000 men, which included the 14th Legion, a detachment of the 20th Legion and auxiliaries. These were fearful odds for



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ABOVE This famous bronze head of Claudius was found 33 miles northeast of Colchester. Its disjointed neckline shows significant signs that it was violently removed from the rest of the statue

a Roman force that was the last effective imperial presence in Britain.

Because the Britons had such a large army they were confident of victory and stationed their families in lines of carts in the rear of their forces. Mancetter was originally called Manduessedum, which translates as 'The Place of Chariots'. It is tantalisingly possible, but by no means certain, that the large number of chariots and carts in Boudica's army left a vivid folk memory that was reflected in the village's place name.

© Getty Images

LEFT Boudica encourages her followers before the Battle of Watling Street

"Conquer or die"

No matter where the final battle was fought it was certainly decisive and recognised as such by both commanders beforehand. According to Tacitus, Boudica and her daughters rode before each tribe in a chariot and asserted that the Britons had fought under female leadership before. Tacitus then recorded Boudica delivering a fiery pre-battle speech where she declared: "It is not as a woman descended from noble ancestry, but as one of the people that I am avenging lost freedom, my scourged body, the outraged chastity of my daughters... If you weigh well the strength of the armies, and the causes of the war, you will see that in this battle you must conquer or die. This is

a woman's resolve; as for men, they may live and be slaves."

Whether Boudica actually uttered these words cannot be known. However, it is possible that Tacitus, through the recollections of his father-in-law Agricola, perhaps recorded some of the real words of Paulinus to his soldiers. While Boudica's warriors chanted loud war cries, Paulinus gave a speech that focussed on discipline and contempt for the enemy: "There, you see more women than warriors. Unwarlike, unarmed, they will give way the moment they have recognised the sword and courage of their conquerors... Close up the ranks, and having discharged your javelins, then with shields and swords continue the work of bloodshed and destruction, without a thought of plunder. When once the victory has been won, everything will be in your power."

The following battle saw the complete rout of Boudica's army. The Britons descended on the Roman lines but Paulinus ordered an attack. The legionaries threw two volleys of several thousand javelins before they advanced in a tight, wedge-shaped column. Using their large shields for defence, the legionaries also stabbed at the Britons as they moved forward with their short swords. The Roman auxiliaries deployed similar tactics while their cavalry used extended lances. The Britons, who were not as well armoured or disciplined as the Romans, were slaughtered and "turned back in flight". Their retreat "proved difficult, because the surrounding wagons had blocked retreat".

The Britons' huge numbers created a huge crush between the carts and the Romans who acted without mercy as men, women, children and even pack animals were killed. Tacitus claimed that 80,000 Britons were killed compared to just 400 Romans and said of the battle: "Great glory, equal to that of our old victories, was won on that day."

Boudica's army was completely destroyed along with her hopes of ending Roman rule in Britain. She died shortly afterwards although the manner of her death, like much of her life, is uncertain. Tacitus said that she "put an end to her life by poison" while Dio claimed that Boudica "fell sick and died". The latter went on to state that: "The Britons mourned her deeply and gave her a costly burial; but, feeling that now at last they were really defeated, they scattered to their homes."

"Boudica's army was destroyed along with her hopes of ending Roman rule in Britain"

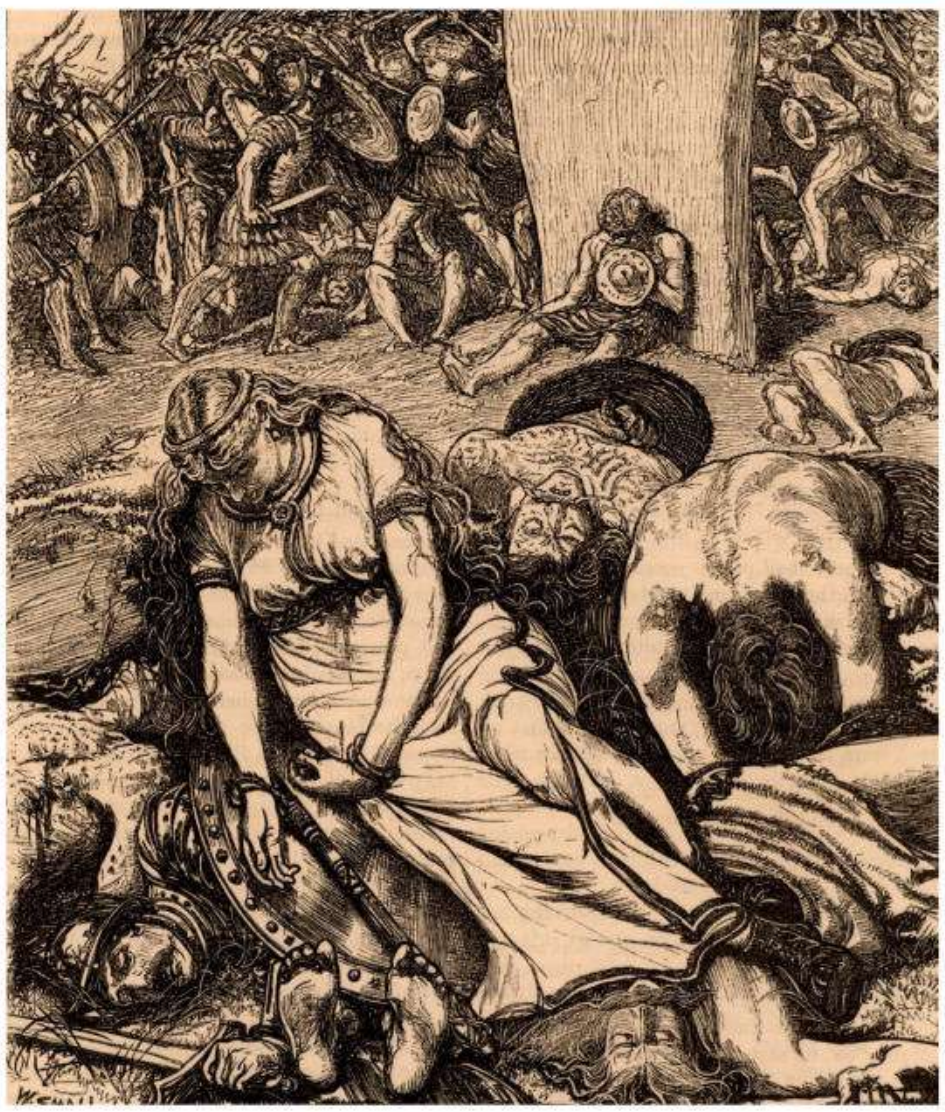
Dio's account of this despondency among the Britons certainly fits with the Roman response to the revolt. Nero reinforced Paulinus's forces in Britain with thousands more legionaries, auxiliaries and cavalry, and hunted down any remaining resisting tribes with "fire and sword". The Britons were then hit by a famine that was caused by them not sowing crops during the revolt.

The heavy-handed Roman crackdown against British resistance is an indication of just how rattled they had been by the actions of Boudica and her followers. Even after the retribution and famine, the Britons were still defiant when one of Nero's courtiers, Polyclitus, was sent to head an enquiry into the revolt. Tacitus wrote that the Britons regarded Polyclitus as "a laughing stock, for they still retained some of the fire of liberty".

This undimmed fighting spirit was the main impact of Boudica's revolt and the fear she spread across the Roman Empire went right to the top. This previously obscure British queen had shaken imperial power to its very core, which was reflected 60 years later in an account of Nero's life by Roman historian Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus. In his account, Boudica had been such a threat that Nero "even thought of withdrawing the army from Britain". These few words succinctly explain why Boudica's story endures and is a remarkable reflection of how close she came to defeating the Roman Empire.

OPPOSITE Boudica encourages the Britons to defend their land against the Romans

BELOW An 1870 engraving depicting Boudica's death by poison after her defeat at the Battle of Watling Street



BELOW This plain by the River Anker at Mancetter, Warwickshire, has been suggested as one of the potential battlefields for Boudica's final defeat by Suetonius Paulinus

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60TH
ANNIVERSARY
FIRST PERSON
IN SPACE

WHAT HAPPENED TO YURI GAGARIN?

How the cosmonaut dealt with fame, his role as a propaganda tool and the mystery of his untimely death explained

Written by Jonathan Gordon

The life of Yuri Gagarin changed in many ways in the 108 minutes he spent orbiting the Earth on 12 April 1961. The most significant change was that he was now the first man to have gone into space, the Vostok 1 rocket having launched him to a maximum altitude of 327km (203 miles). The name Yuri Gagarin became known across the globe he now looked down upon. Of less international significance, but important to him, Gagarin was promoted from senior lieutenant to major while still in the air. It's also likely, but not confirmed, that his wife Valentina Gagarina was rather upset with him because he had told her his flight would be two days later.

That last point reflects a recurring theme in the life of Gagarin: a willingness to obscure the truth for the greater good or national security. He appears to have been a true patriot and believer in the Soviet cause, at least in these years. At the age of just 27 when this historic launch took place, he was a young man with much to look forward to. Less than seven years later he would be dead in a tragic plane crash around which there are still many unanswered questions.

ORIGINS

Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin was a man born of relatively humble beginnings, although not necessarily as humble as Soviet propaganda liked to make out. Born in 1934, he grew up in Klushino near Gzhatsk on a collective farm. His father Alexey Ivanovich Gagarin maintained many of the buildings in the community as a carpenter; his mother Anna Timofeyevna Gagarina was from St Petersburg and well-educated, although she worked on the farm as a cow herd.

He grew up during a tumultuous time for Russia and was around seven years old when the region was occupied by German forces from November 1941. His family survived the war and Gagarin resumed his education, where he excelled at

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maths and physics, but wanted to find work early to help his family. He started out at 16 taking a steel foundry apprenticeship and later getting a scholarship to a technical school to become a molder. However, this school also had an AeroClub where he could learn to fly.

A HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

It didn't take long for flying to become Gagarin's passion and he joined the military to continue this as a new career path. He attended the Orenburg Pilot School, where his determination to learn from mistakes and get right back in the cockpit impressed his instructors. He wasn't necessarily the best, but he seems to have been committed to making himself better. And while his professional life was beginning to take some shape he also met his future wife, medical student Valentina Goryacheva. They married on the same day as his graduation from Orenburg with top-ranking honours in November 1957. Just the month before, while he was preparing for his exams and nuptials, the USSR launched Sputnik 1 into space.

Gagarin's sights were not set anywhere near as high, however, as he was initially posted to the Arctic Circle at Murmansk to fly MiG-15 jets; a tough commission for the newlyweds hoping to build a family together. Nevertheless their first daughter was born here in 1959, whom they named Lena.

Unbeknownst to Gagarin, the USSR was quietly on the hunt for pilots to become the first cosmonauts, putting potential candidates through rigorous psychological testing and interviews. An initial longlist of 2,200 pilots was whittled down to just 20 to join the Soviet space program, and the 26-year-old Gagarin was among them.

BELOW-LEFT Gagarin's smile was made into a part of his public persona by Soviet propaganda

BELOW Massive crowds came out to see Gagarin wherever he went, such as in this scene from London in 1961

MAKING A SOVIET HERO

More and more testing would follow, mostly around physical fitness since no one could be sure what toll the experience of space travel might have on the human body. A love of sports, particularly ice hockey and basketball (which he was good at despite being only 157cm tall) put Gagarin in good shape. In the end it came down to Gagarin and friendly rival Gherman Titov.

There were many factors that determined the final choice, although the decision was only revealed to both men the night before the launch on 12 April. The political elements were important. Nikita Khrushchev had succeeded Joseph Stalin as premier of the USSR in 1958 and was proud of his own peasant upbringing. Titov, the son of a teacher, didn't have quite the same appeal as Gagarin, who had grown up in similar circumstances to the new Soviet leader. Gagarin's success would reflect well on the communist project. Moreover, Titov is described as being more combative, reserved, even a little abrasive, at least compared to the affable, smiling Gagarin, who might make a better poster boy for the cosmonaut program.

There were other, perhaps more practical and even grim considerations. Titov seems to have been the stronger pilot and the space program wanted to follow up this first flight of the Vostok 1 rocket with a second, longer flight of 24 hours. Being the superior pilot, Titov was better placed to make that potentially gruelling mission a success. Nikolai Kamanin, head of cosmonaut training for the Soviet space program, also considered the potential risks of losing his best pilot on this first mission.

Ultimately Gagarin was selected, and while both cosmonauts suited up on the morning of 12 April, only one was going up to make history. No one had been publicly told about the event, with Gagarin even keeping it a secret from his wife. The Americans knew, though, and were bracing themselves for the public relations backlash from being beaten so early in the space race.

AN ICON

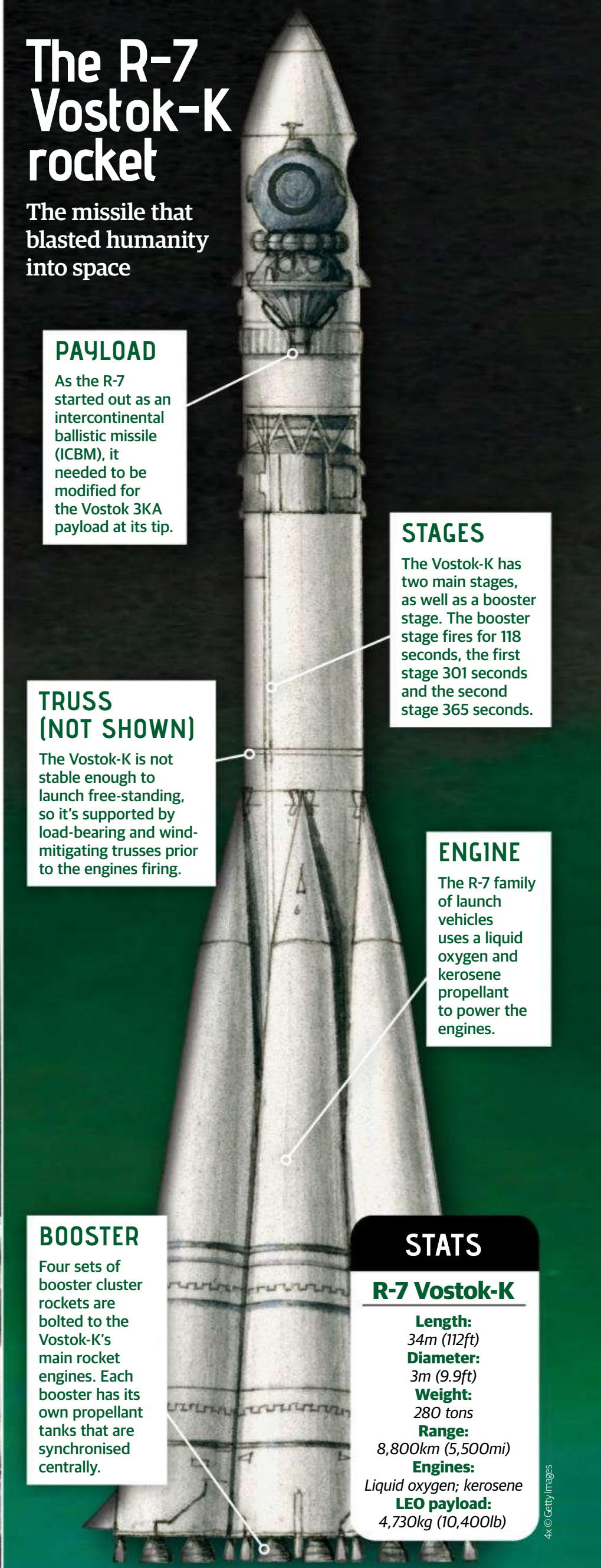
We won't concentrate too much on the details of the flight itself here, as that information is explained well elsewhere, and we

"IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR FLYING TO BECOME GAGARIN'S PASSION"

ABOVE Yuri Gagarin pictured with his wife Valentina and first daughter Lena

want to concentrate on the man at the centre of all of these events. But we will briefly mention some of the later stages of the mission as it reflects something of the role Gagarin was about to play as a Soviet icon and face of the space program.

In the numerous interviews with reporters from around the world Gagarin insisted that the flight had taken place without difficulties and that he'd landed in his capsule as planned. But this was not the case. The detaching sequence of the Vostok 1 had proven to be challenging on reentry, forcing his capsule into a spin. Thankfully the heat from reentry burned through some cables connecting the module to set his capsule free to descend. ▶



The R-7 Vostok-K rocket

The missile that blasted humanity into space

PAYLOAD

As the R-7 started out as an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), it needed to be modified for the Vostok 3KA payload at its tip.

STAGES

The Vostok-K has two main stages, as well as a booster stage. The booster stage fires for 118 seconds, the first stage 301 seconds and the second stage 365 seconds.

TRUSS (NOT SHOWN)

The Vostok-K is not stable enough to launch free-standing, so it's supported by load-bearing and wind-mitigating trusses prior to the engines firing.

ENGINE

The R-7 family of launch vehicles uses a liquid oxygen and kerosene propellant to power the engines.

BOOSTER

Four sets of booster cluster rockets are bolted to the Vostok-K's main rocket engines. Each booster has its own propellant tanks that are synchronised centrally.

STATS

R-7 Vostok-K

Length:
34m (112ft)
Diameter:
3m (9.9ft)
Weight:
280 tons
Range:
8,800km (5,500mi)
Engines:
Liquid oxygen; kerosene
LEO payload:
4,730kg (10,400lb)

4x © Getty Images

Gagarin's Flight

Breaking down his world-changing launch and landing

1. BLAST OFF

Yuri Gagarin's Vostok 1 spacecraft launched on 12 April 1961 at 06:07UTC, blasting off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome, a spaceport in southern Kazakhstan.

2. SEPARATION

At 06:09 four strap-on boosters broke away from the rocket, having depleted their propellant. Three minutes later the rocket's core stage separated from the spacecraft and final rocket stage.

3. REACHING ORBIT

On its ascent and as it reached orbit, the final rocket stage shut down and dropped from the spacecraft. The capsule reached a maximum height of 327 kilometres (203 miles).

4. EYE ON THE WORLD

A large window in the capsule ensured Gagarin was able to see the outer surroundings of space. It was covered by a payload shroud during the launch.

5. REVOLVING AROUND THE EARTH

Gagarin was able to make a single revolution of Earth on a journey of 40,868.6 kilometres (25,394.8 miles), which took 108 minutes.

"GAGARIN REPRESENTED A BRIGHT FUTURE WHERE TECHNOLOGY COULD MAKE ANYTHING POSSIBLE"

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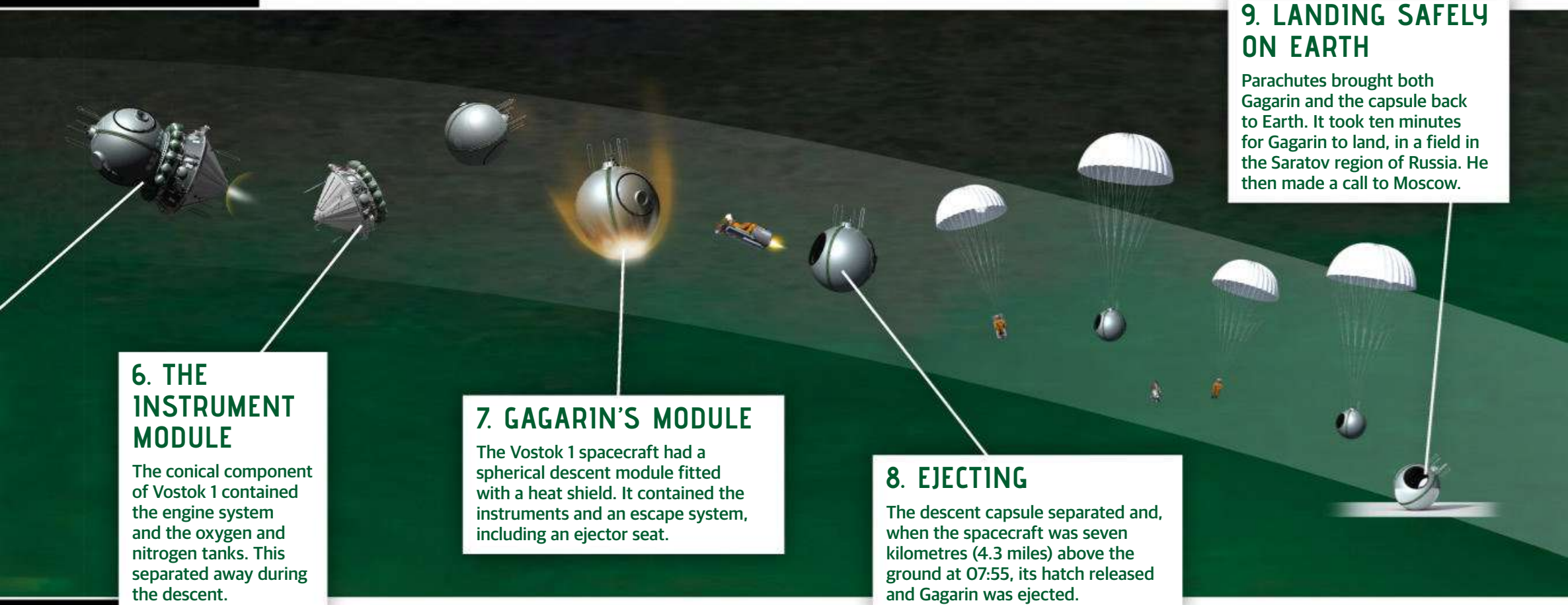

6. THE INSTRUMENT MODULE
The conical component of Vostok 1 contained the engine system and the oxygen and nitrogen tanks. This separated away during the descent.
7. GAGARIN'S MODULE
The Vostok 1 spacecraft had a spherical descent module fitted with a heat shield. It contained the instruments and an escape system, including an ejector seat.
8. EJECTING
The descent capsule separated and, when the spacecraft was seven kilometres (4.3 miles) above the ground at 07:55, its hatch released and Gagarin was ejected.
9. LANDING SAFELY ON EARTH
Parachutes brought both Gagarin and the capsule back to Earth. It took ten minutes for Gagarin to land, in a field in the Saratov region of Russia. He then made a call to Moscow.

Still, he needed to eject from the capsule and parachute down solo. He was supposed to land inside the capsule, but it was eminently safer not to. The lie played a number of roles. It saved the Soviet space program from admitting any errors, it projected the unqualified success of the cosmonaut program, and it obscured facts that might have been beneficial to NASA and other experts. It wasn't too beneficial for Titov as he would experience the exact same issues upon reentry from his 24-hour flight, but he also eventually managed to descend safely.

From the beginning then, Gagarin was a faithful spokesman for the USSR and the space program, willing to toe the party line and do so with a broad smile on his face. There is general agreement that the smiling cosmonaut image cultivated by the Soviet Union was genuinely what Gagarin was like, but he played into it too. For instance, in his stage-managed arrival in Moscow on 14 April 1961, Gagarin emerged from a plane and approached Khrushchev across a red carpet, only to look down and see his shoelace was untied. When given the chance to have the footage edited, Gagarin insisted it be left alone as it reflected his humanity. He also claimed he was more scared in that moment of tripping than he ever had been in orbit.

This also appears to have been a moment of genuine, unchoreographed joy for the people of the USSR. Just as Khrushchev was opening up the country and publicly rebuking the violence of his predecessor Stalin, so Gagarin represented a bright future where technology could make anything possible. Almost immediately, Gagarin was being sent on visits to various neighbouring countries to promote this bright, glorious future and then abroad, visiting nearly 30 nations in the next few years including a trip to London, where he got to meet Elizabeth II. However, his growing position of fame didn't necessarily fit comfortably with him.

FALL TO EARTH

According to Russian journalist Yaroslav Golovanov, who followed Gagarin's life for many years and wrote a book on him, the first cosmonaut had misgivings about the adulation he was receiving, not least because he hadn't achieved his feat alone. He disliked being thought of as a superhero or particularly special. Maintaining his cheerful, acquiescent personality was taking a toll. It might not sound like such a great hardship for the young man, but since his historic flight he had also been grounded, unable to do the thing he loved the most: fly.

It may have been some of this frustration, or perhaps the accumulation of parties and fast living, that led to one of Gagarin's darker moments. In September 1961, just after Titov completed his 24-hour flight, the cosmonauts and their families were hosted at a resort. Seemingly very drunk, Gagarin entered the room of one of the nursing staff who worked there, locking the door behind him and making sexual advances on her. His wife followed fast behind him and banged on the door, demanding entry. As the young nurse, named only Anna in most reports, went to the door, Gagarin jumped out of the window to the balcony, tripped and fell head-first onto the concrete below.

Bleeding profusely, there was genuine concern for Gagarin's health. It turned out he had fractured his skull in the fall as well as cutting open his forehead near his eyebrow. The drunken behaviour of the cosmonauts, not just Gagarin, was becoming a matter of concern for the men in charge, and this was just the latest example. As well as embarrassing, it also meant that Gagarin couldn't attend the upcoming 22nd Party Congress alongside Khrushchev as planned. The official story was that he had tripped saving his daughter from a fall. Whatever was motivating this drinking and loose behaviour, a strain on Gagarin's personal and professional lives was revealing itself.

© Getty Images

LEFT Despite his experience an expertise, Gagarin would only go into space once

RIGHT Security holds back an adoring crowd at student event in Helsinki, Finland in 1962

More Soviet Firsts

It wasn't even a race in the early years

FIRST ARTIFICIAL SATELLITE

Image source: wiki/ NSSDC, NASA

SPUTNIK 1

4 October 1957

Measuring just 58cm in diameter, Sputnik 1 was launched from Baikonur Cosmodrome. It transmitted for three weeks before the batteries finally died, but remained in orbit for another 92 days, completing 1,400 orbits.

LAIKA

3 November 1957

The first living being to orbit the planet was a female terrier named Laika. Her Sputnik 2 capsule was not intended to return, but the planned ten-day experience was cut short as overheating in the pod killed her.

FIRST ANIMAL

FIRST ON THE MOON

LUNA 2 PROBE

12 September 1959

While the Americans would put the first person on the Moon, it was the USSR that touched it first with Luna 2. It impacted with the Moon's surface on 12 September and scattered spherical objects with the Soviet symbol on them to mark the spot.

BELKA AND STRELKA

19 August 1960

This Sputnik 5 mission involved two dogs going into orbit and, most importantly, returning safely. Belka and Stelka were joined by mice, plants and more to test biological reactions. The capsule was successfully recovered after 17 orbits.

FIRST ANIMALS TO ORBIT AND RETURN

FIRST WOMAN IN SPACE

VALENTINA TERESHKOVA

16 June 1963

Not only was Tereshkova the first woman in space, her flight was significantly longer than Gagarin had enjoyed. Tereshkova remained in orbit for three days, making 48 orbits of Earth and conducting various experiments.

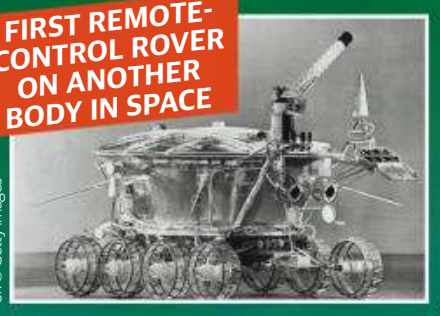
ALEXEI LEONOV

18 March 1965

This two-man mission saw the first ever EVA (Extra Vehicular Activity) as Alexei Leonov exited the craft through an air lock, wearing a life support system as a backpack to his space suit. His space walk lasted 20 minutes.

FIRST SPACEWALK

FIRST REMOTE-CONTROL ROVER ON ANOTHER BODY IN SPACE



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LUNOKHOD 1

10 November 1970

Launched aboard Luna 17, Lunokhod 1 descended the ramp of the spacecraft to become the first remote lunar rover of its kind. It was intended to run for three lunar days but managed to last 11, transmitting 20,000 TV pictures in that time.

Returning in 1962 to the cosmonaut training centre at Star City, the facility built especially for the training and accommodation of the USSR's cosmonauts, Gagarin was appointed to train the next generation of pilots, which included the first class of women. Foreign trips and events with Khrushchev continued as well, however, as he grew closer with the premier. He was also given a position as deputy to the Supreme Soviet, the elected chamber of the Soviet system, where he represented the district of Smolensk for two terms between 1962 and 1966. While the Supreme Soviet held little real power, it did allow him to do favours for those who needed them. The largesse of Gagarin, especially for everyday citizens, was well known.

From December 1963, a few months after Valentina Tereshkova had become the first woman in space, Gagarin was made deputy director of the Cosmonaut Training Centre. While this was a prestigious position, it also indicated how far away Gagarin was getting from ever going up into space himself again. By now it was known that physical fitness, while important, was not the be

"DISILLUSIONED AFTER THE DEATH OF KOMAROV, GAGARIN IS THOUGHT TO HAVE FALLEN BACK INTO HEAVY DRINKING"

all and end all of space travel. New cosmonauts needed to pass basic fitness tests, but the main concern was their scientific and technical acumen.

STARTING AGAIN

Not wishing to give up, Gagarin registered with the Zhukovsky Academy to earn a Pilot-Engineer-Cosmonaut diploma. While at the Academy he was given a room at the nearby Komsomol (communist youth movement) hotel, where he could stay when studying late. It also became the place Gagarin would entertain guests, including the many young women he met and continued to carry on affairs with, much to the anger and dismay of his wife, who caught him on at least one occasion.

While Gagarin pushed for more professional relevance his political standing took a significant blow when Khrushchev was ousted from power and replaced by the much more conservative Leonid Brezhnev. Gagarin's friendly relationship with Khrushchev did him no favours with the new first secretary. But if his political

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ABOVE This steel statue dedicated to Gagarin stands 30 meters tall in Leninsky Prospekt

TOP-INSET It was a variant of this MiG-15 that Gagarin was flying when he crashed

LEFT-INSET The scar from Gagarin's drunken balcony tumble couldn't be hidden

role was diminished, it at least allowed him to refocus on the space program.

Gagarin was made backup cosmonaut for the next mission, named Soyuz, led by Vladimir Komarov. However the mission was beset with interference from above. The launch happened on 23 April 1967 but the Soyuz 1, intended to dock with Soyuz 2 to test such a capability, was plagued by problems. Ultimately the mission was aborted, but that didn't save Komarov, whose parachutes failed on reentry. His capsule slammed into the Earth and he was killed instantly. Komarov was the first cosmonaut to die as the result of a space flight, just a few months after the crew of NASA's Apollo 1 had been killed in a fire.

DEATH AND CONSPIRACY

Understandably disillusioned after the death of Komarov, Gagarin is thought to have fallen back into heavy drinking and partying at his Star City home, but he continued to push forward with his training and qualifications. He graduated from the Zhukovsky Academy on 18 February 1968 and was absolutely determined to get back in the pilot's seat having been on the ground for around five months.

He turned to experienced test pilot and trainer Vladimir Seregin to get him back in the air. It was a matter of professional pride and standing among his peers that he should be just as good a pilot as the men he was training. And so on 27 March 1968 they took off in a two-seater MiG-15UTI jet, with Seregin in the back, instructor seat. After about 30 minutes communication with the plane was lost.

It took four hours for the wreckage of the MiG to be found and it was clear that few human remains were going to be found at the crash site. Rumours began to swirl that Gagarin and Seregin had been drunk, or that Gagarin had been assassinated. Some wilder suggestions were that the first man in space had been abducted by aliens. The official report blamed poor weather.

In the years since, with the collapse of the USSR opening up records, we have a clearer if not crisp picture of what happened, and many factors were likely at play. First, a collision with a weather balloon or shockwave from a supersonic jet that had been flying too low seems to have been involved. The resultant spin that the MiG-15 was put in, either from the shockwave or the depressurising of the cockpit, was being corrected by the pilots as they crashed. They may also have thought they had more elevation than was the case as air traffic control had faulty information and cloud cover made visual verification challenging. Either way, a sharp turn or spin in the older model jet, with fuel tanks on its wings making such manoeuvres hard, was the ultimate cause of the crash. Such a litany of failures would have been damaging to the image of the Soviet Union, which would appear to be justification enough for a cover-up.

While the truth may never fully be known, just as the opening up of existing records has helped to narrow the possibilities, so the end of the Cold War has allowed Gagarin to be celebrated more widely as a pioneer for humanity. The best illustration of this is that Cosmonautics Day, celebrated in the USSR since 12 April 1962 to mark the anniversary of Gagarin's flight, was made the basis for the International Day of Human Space Flight by the United Nations in 2011, on the 50th anniversary. To mark 'Yuri's Day' Russian, American and Italian astronauts on board the International Space Station came together to celebrate.

OPPOSITE Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space, poses with Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space

ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI: RENAISSANCE FEMINIST?

The acclaimed Baroque artist defied expectations and forged her own career in a male-dominated world

Written by Jessica Leggett

The most celebrated female painter of the 17th century, Artemisia Gentileschi's art was internationally renowned and collected by notable patrons such as King Philip IV of Spain. Through her paintings, she highlighted the oppression and injustice women faced living in a patriarchal society, giving female figures the power and agency that had been ignored by other artists.

Gentileschi was born in Rome in 1593, the only daughter of Orazio Gentileschi, a painter, and Prudentia Montoni. Her mother died when she was just 12 years old and Gentileschi was sheltered by her father, who rarely allowed her to leave the house.

Orazio taught his daughter how to paint and she quickly showed more aptitude for it than her brothers. Her father's painting style was influenced by the work of his associate and friend, the renowned artist Caravaggio, known for his dynamic use of chiaroscuro, the juxtaposition of light and dark. This, in turn, influenced Gentileschi's own style.

In 1610, she produced her earliest known signed painting, *Susanna and the Elders*. Depicting a scene from the *Book of Susanna*, the painting illustrates an uncomfortable Susanna as she tries to avoid the lecherous attentions of two men while bathing. Many artists had painted this scene before Gentileschi, showing Susanna through the male gaze either unaware of the lewd men or being flirtatious towards them. As for Gentileschi, she focused on Susanna's perspective and her obvious distress at being harassed by the men.

The following year, 17-year-old Gentileschi was raped by the artist Agostino Tassi in her family home. An acquaintance and colleague of her father, Tassi had been hired to teach Gentileschi drawing and perspective. After the attack, Tassi – almost twice her age – promised to marry Gentileschi and they had an affair. When he failed to deliver on his promise, an outraged Orazio pressed charges against Tassi for damaging his family's reputation, demanding that he either marry his daughter or pay for her dowry.

A trial was held in March 1612 and it lasted for seven months, gripping everyone in Rome. Thanks to surviving documentation of the trial, we know that the judge had Gentileschi tortured while providing her testimony to ensure that she was telling the truth. Cords were wrapped and tightened around her fingers – a method that could have broken them – but Gentileschi was composed and resilient, maintaining her honesty. While undergoing torture in the courtroom, she defiantly faced Tassi and declared "This is the ring that you give me and these are your promises."

BELOW Christina was renowned as one of the most learned women in Europe

2x © Alamy

ABOVE *Judith Slaying Holofernes* was painted by Gentileschi between 1612-13

LEFT Gentileschi's *Self-Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria* was only discovered in 2017

As part of her harrowing testimony, itself a rare example of a woman speaking out against oppression, Gentileschi stated that she "scratched his face and pulled his hair" while trying to defend herself. During the trial, Tassi claimed that Gentileschi was a loose woman and at one point he even asserted he was already married – but this may have been a dubious attempt to avoid marrying Gentileschi.

"Her depictions were unique, portraying these women in a powerful and yet sympathetic light, rather than as passive objects"

Tassi was eventually convicted of raping Gentileschi and sentenced to be exiled from Rome for five years. Yet he did not leave the city nor did he hide, and he was only exiled a year later after he committed another crime. Meanwhile, despite her victory, Gentileschi's reputation had been left in tatters and she was widely seen in Rome as a promiscuous woman.

The day after Tassi's sentence was announced, she was married off to Pierantonio Stiattesi, a fellow artist, and the couple quickly relocated to Florence. Over the next few years, Gentileschi and her husband had five children together, although sadly only one of them – their daughter Prudentia – survived into adulthood.

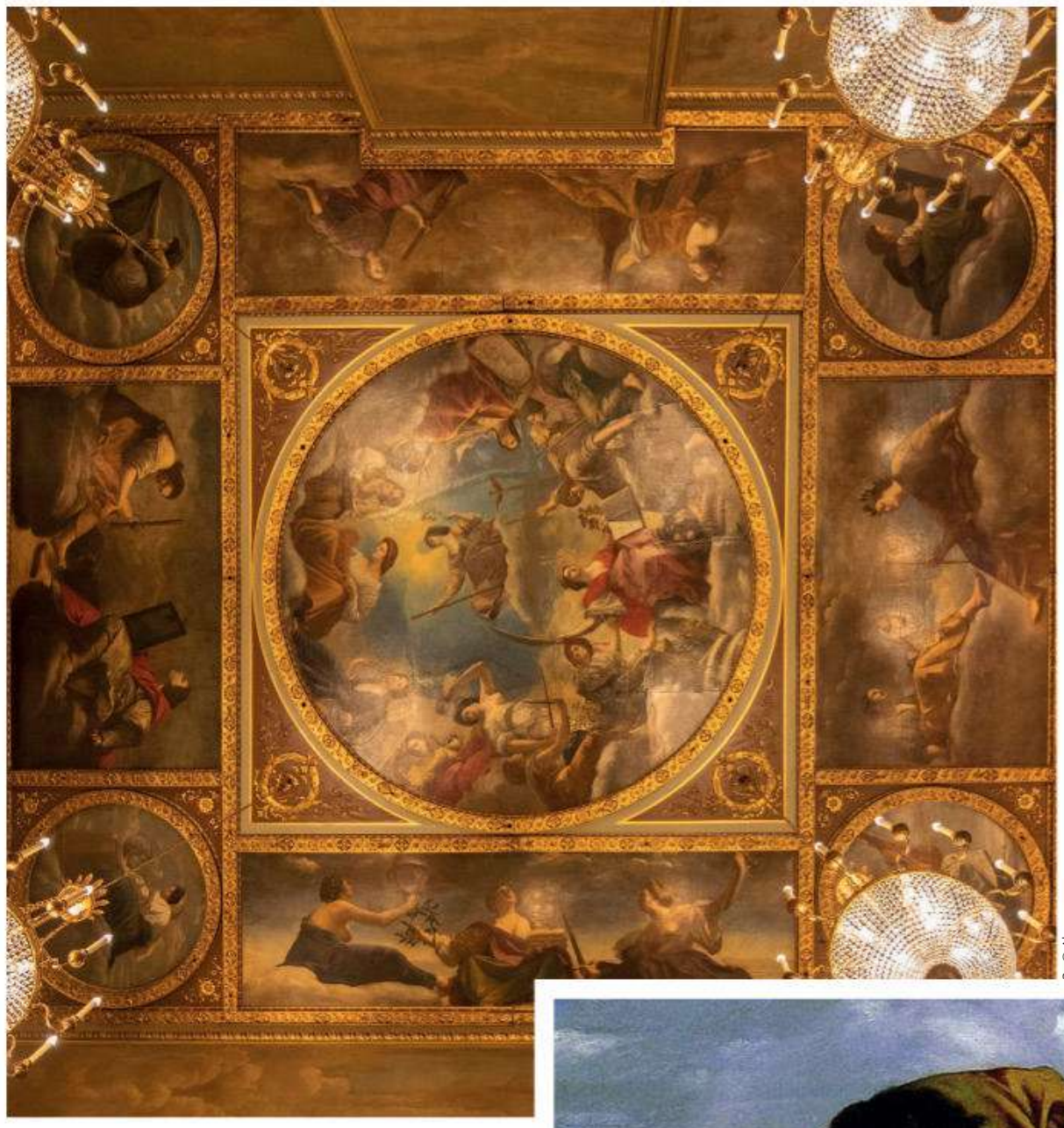
With her fresh start, Gentileschi built up her career. Surrounded by other artists and court painters in Florence, her creativity flourished and she was able to develop her own art style, away from her father's

influence. A popular figure at the royal court, she established relationships with intellectuals and artists such as Cristofano Allori and Galileo, and she enjoyed the patronage of the powerful and wealthy House of Medici. Gentileschi's popularity amongst intellectual circles was even more remarkable considering that she had received no formal education as a child, and was essentially illiterate when she arrived in Florence.

It has been argued that Gentileschi's success was partly due to the fact that she was unusual, at a time when female professional painters were rare, and so she was interesting to patrons. Also, she offered something different to the other male artists of her day. Like them, she painted mythical and biblical female protagonists but her depictions were unique, portraying these women in a powerful and yet sympathetic light, rather than as passive objects.

Gentileschi was also known for her self-portraits and she created a series of them in Florence, with her image becoming popular among collectors. Only a few examples of these survive today, including her *Self-Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria*. Catherine was a female martyr, who was tortured on a spiked wheel by Roman Emperor Maxentius for refusing to renounce Christianity, with the wheel eventually breaking. In her painting, Gentileschi as Catherine holds the broken wheel to symbolise how she overcame her torture, likely in reference to the rape trial.

Undoubtedly, one of Gentileschi's most iconic paintings is *Judith Slaying Holofernes*. Judith is an Israelite who pretends to seduce Holofernes before decapitating him, and a woman whom Gentileschi painted more than once.



LEFT *An Allegory of Peace and the Arts*, painted by Orazio and possibly Artemisia

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BELOW Gentileschi's painting *Susanna and the Elders*

dynamic between men and women. Here, Judith and her maidservant are actively in control, working together to kill a man who is physically stronger than them. It is just one of Gentileschi's many paintings that focus on strong, capable women and depict them through the female gaze.

Gentileschi's skill was recognised when she became the first woman to join the Accademia del Disegno, the Academy of the Arts of Drawing, in 1616. After eight years in Florence, she returned to Rome in 1620 and separated from her husband. Gentileschi continued her career, briefly moving to Venice sometime between 1626 and 1627, before settling in Naples in 1630.

"Sadly, although Gentileschi was a celebrated artist in her lifetime, her work fell into obscurity after her death"

Inspired by Caravaggio's own version of the scene, her painting invokes intense realism with Judith and her maidservant cutting off Holofernes' head, while blood spurts out of his neck.

The painting is commonly seen as an expression of Gentileschi's anger and desire for revenge after she was raped, with Judith representing her and Holofernes representing Tassi. However, this view is debated and in recent years, scholars have considered how the painting portrays a reversal of the traditional power

Gentileschi remained in Naples for the rest of her life, aside from when she paid a visit to England in 1638 after receiving an invitation from King Charles I. Orazio had been based in England as the king's court painter since 1626 and it is thought that Gentileschi assisted her father in completing a ceiling painting at the

Queen's House in Greenwich for Queen Henrietta Maria, titled *An Allegory of Peace and the Arts*.

It was during this stay in England that Gentileschi likely produced her *Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting*. In allegorical works, 'Painting' was traditionally personified as a woman. Gentileschi, as a female professional artist, was therefore in a unique position to depict herself as a painter at work and to identify herself as the personification of Painting. It is a sophisticated piece and a testament to Gentileschi's abilities as an artist, as she was able to accurately paint herself in such a difficult pose.

Orazio died in 1639 and Gentileschi eventually returned to Naples sometime before the outbreak of the English Civil War in 1642. We don't know when she died but the last known record of her is dated to 1654. It has been suggested that she may have died during the plague of 1656 that swept through Naples, but there is no evidence to prove this.

Although Gentileschi was a celebrated artist in her lifetime, her work fell into obscurity after her death. Her paintings were often mistaken for those who'd worked with Caravaggio or even her father, and there was no real assessment or definition of her style for centuries.

This changed in the 20th century when her work was finally reinterpreted and she was transformed into a proto-feminist icon for her depictions of women. However, for a long time her art was frequently seen through her experience of rape, which has often overshadowed both her career as an artist and critical assessments of her work.

Although the rape was undeniably a crucial part of Gentileschi's story, it is important to remember that she experienced many other things that also informed her work – for example, the loss of her mother and her children, as well as her fight to build a career as a female artist in a patriarchal society.

Having said this, Gentileschi's powerful and dramatic paintings should not be considered only in terms of her biography or as revengeful catharsis for the injustice and hardships that she – and many other women – faced. Thankfully, in recent years more people have been looking at Gentileschi in the way that she deserves: as an accomplished artist rather than just as a victim.

THE WWII SCHOOL FOR ESCAPE ARTISTS

Historian and author Dr Helen Fry reveals the story of MI9, one of Britain's most secretive special agencies

Written by Jonathan Gordon

© Getty Images

The WWII School For Escape Artists

EXPERT BIO

DR HELEN FRY

Historian and author

Specialising in the social history of World War II, Fry has written and edited over 25 books. Her recent releases include the acclaimed *The Walls Have Ears* (2019) and the award-nominated *MI9* (2020).

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ABOVE
British prisoners of war being led through Dieppe in August 1942

Long before Winston Churchill called for the newly formed Special Operations Executive (SOE) to "set Europe ablaze" with its sabotage campaign, Britain was already conducting secret missions behind enemy lines through agencies like MI6. Lesser known, though, is the work of MI9, established to aid British personnel in evading and escaping capture. This specialist agency trained soldiers, set up escape networks to harbour escapees and created tools to aid POWs to escape in the first place. Historian Dr Helen Fry has delved into newly declassified files and documents to lift the lid on one of World War II's most secretive agencies, and we were delighted to learn more about it from her.

What was the primary mission of MI9?

The primary purpose of MI9 – which was not dissimilar to MI5 and MI6, the organisations we're more familiar with – was actually to facilitate escape and evasion during World War II. It was established in December 1939, quite early in the war, with a view to bring airmen, soldiers and Allied personnel back from behind enemy lines to fight again.

The activities of MI9 were highly secretive, so when did the organisation first become publicly acknowledged?

In the first 50 or 60 years after the war ended, not much was known about MI9 and the first books about it were written by those who had served with MI9: MRD Foot, James Langley and Airey Neave. These became the classic histories of MI9, which would be pretty hard to beat, really, but they didn't have access to the declassified files when they were writing. My book, which is the first history of MI9 for 40 years (and I was astonished when I discovered that was the case) actually uses, for the very first time, those declassified files at the National Archives in London.

How close was MI9 related to the SOE and the mission to 'set Europe ablaze'?

MI9 was very separate from SOE. Both organisations had means of escape and evasion, of course. There was a very conscious effort on the part of Claude Dansey, the deputy head of MI6, to keep the MI6, MI9 and SOE escape lines separate from each other, so there was no blurring of the boundaries. He oversaw the escape lines for both MI9 and MI6 to make sure of this. MI6 wanted to do its top secret work behind enemy lines and didn't want evaders and escapers coming too close to its work, nor the SOE agents and saboteurs. Dansey began to separate them as much as possible and keep things apart, but he became very concerned about SOE because it was blowing things up noisily behind enemy lines. Meanwhile MI9 as well as MI6 were also doing intelligence operations, secret stuff behind enemy lines. There was a lot of bitter rivalry between Dansey and SOE – he hated SOE. So it was quite a fractured relationship.

"The whole training process and the mindset of what he termed 'escape-mindedness' was developed"

MI9 was obviously a highly clandestine organisation. What do we have in terms of records and official history that we can draw on for information about it?

I discovered in my research that there were thousands upon thousands of declassified files. It became a choice in the research of managing the sheer volume of files on MI9, which operated not just in Western Europe but in the Far East, the Middle East and Balkans, Italy and Greece. So for me, that was a challenge. What we have in the declassified files are largely the escape reports from escapers and evaders from when they were debriefed by MI9; we also have some of the MI9 administrative files, which are very interesting to see how it was set up. There are MI9 training manuals and the bulletins (newsletters), which personnel could read, particularly before going into action, which might give them lots of new ideas about how to evade capture in the fast-changing situation behind enemy lines. What we don't have are the declassified files of the helpers, so it's not possible to know the precise number who aided MI9 and the escape lines. But it is certainly thousands of men and women, from as young as 16 and up to people in their 80s, and from diverse backgrounds. To protect them and their families forever, their files have never been released by the British government or War Office. MI9 was also involved in a very top-secret part of British Intelligence known as 'Room 900', or 'Intelligence School 9'. This section dropped agents behind enemy lines, very similar to SOE, but they were not blowing stuff up or engaged in other acts of sabotage. We don't have the operational mission files for them, we just have a couple of declassified examples of what they did, so there is some secrecy and mystery still surrounding these operations.

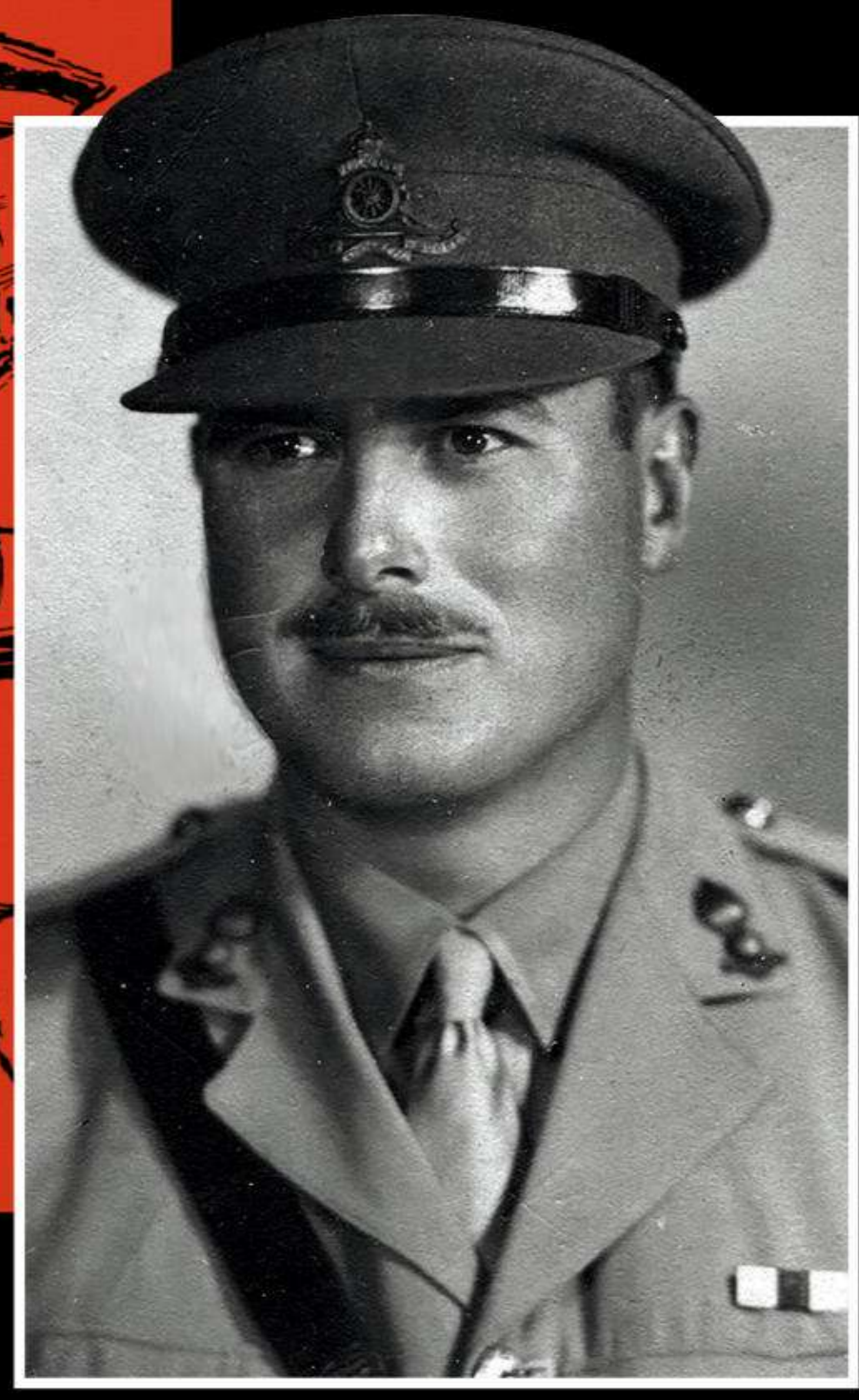

Image source: Courtesy Claire Derry

RIGHT
Sam Derry, head of the Rome Escape Organisation from 1943, is believed to have rescued 4,000 Allied soldiers

Who were some of the key figures involved in MI9?

When we think about MI9 we think about the commanding officer Brigadier Norman Crockatt. A very proud Scotsman and no lover of red tape, he liked to think outside the box and was ideal as MI9's commander in chief, and he was largely responsible for the philosophy behind MI9. The whole training process and the mindset of what he termed "escape-mindedness" was developed. It was a whole philosophy and proved terribly important to prepare personnel going into action. We also have two other giants of MI9, Jimmy Langley, (an escaper after Dunkirk in 1940 and wounded) and Airey Neave, who of course famously became the first British officer to successfully escape from Colditz Castle near Leipzig in Germany and make it back to Britain. His successful escape was a huge boost at MI9 headquarters and out came the pink gin in celebration because it was believed that Colditz Castle was impenetrable.

How did MI9 assist POWs in making their escapes?

There were a number of techniques, not only escape lines, which were of course essential for getting POWs out of Western Europe. From MI9 headquarters at Wilton Park, which is in Buckinghamshire (not to be confused with the Wilson Park in Sussex) they coordinated this incredible programme, which included the escape devices that became legendary in Ian Fleming's James Bond novels. Fleming hadn't invented the idea of the 'Q' gadgets, it originally came from MI9, although of course Fleming developed them much, much further. These gadgets became very important in MI9's wartime operations. The key figure in the escape gadgets was Christopher Clayton Hutton, who was what we might call an eccentric inventor who loved to tinker with things to try and solve problems. His task, to give you one example, was to find ways to hide things like miniature compasses inside ordinary objects. So you get the famous 'button compass', where the compass is hidden behind a button, usually the first button on the uniform. Wherever personnel were in action, if they needed it, they could unscrew the button and would always have an escape compass with them. Astonishingly, we've got something like 1.3 million of these that were produced in wartime. And then you have escape maps, which were equally significant and useful. This was the skulduggery, or the cheekiness, of MI9 in terms of thinking of ways to send this stuff into the POW camps. And that was a huge help to the prisoners, who did things like smuggling in fake parcels inside games.

> "Fleming hadn't invented the idea of the 'Q' gadgets, it originally came from MI9"

How much work did MI9 do by way of training people in evasion and escape tactics ahead of deployment?

This is one of the areas that people don't often know about but all of our personnel going into action – whether they were army, air, navy or commandos – they all actually went through a three-week MI9 training programme. MI9 had a secret site to start with in Harrow just outside London, and then in North London in Highgate, where MI9 requisitioned a house called Caen Wood Towers, known today as Athlone House. It's a very famous house in North London, right there on the edge of Hampstead Heath. And again it goes back to Crockatt and his whole philosophy of escape-mindedness, which he said was not

necessarily natural if you're disorientated after capture, when you're not necessarily going to think logically about escape. So he believed that training in evasion and escape prepared the personnel in an escape-mindedness. It could be very tiny things that could give you away, and one example I like to give of that is the instruction in the training manual: "Do not walk in a British way." Apparently they could give themselves away, even if they were in civilian clothes with French labels, just by the way they walked. That kind of stuff was part of their training. Another tip was don't cycle round a roundabout the wrong way. That's how one of the prisoners actually got recaptured. He's not named, but he was given as an example in the training manuals. He was recaptured and sent back to a prisoner of war camp.

Do we have a sense of how successful MI9 was or became during the course of WWII?

In terms of escape and evasion, it's a huge legacy. Over 35,000 Allied and Commonwealth personnel were saved as a result of MI9. They were brought out to be able to fight another day and the Germans didn't have anything equivalent to that. But I believe the legacy goes beyond that.

What I discovered, which I wasn't expecting to discover, is that MI9 was this huge intelligence gathering organisation. As well as the rescue missions of Allied personnel, it was the belief that your personnel are valuable sources of intelligence in their own right. So when they came back they had a debrief – 'interrogated', as it was called – by MI9 interrogators. They were interrogated not only about their escape (which potentially gave information and advice for future escapes) and the conditions behind enemy lines, they were also asked about what they had seen on the ground in terms of military installations, movement of troops, etc. What had they seen as they travelled? From curfews to fences around ports, absolutely anything. I was astonished by the thick volumes of files full of this kind of intelligence. I also discovered (and this for me is really revelatory about MI9) that its top-secret section Room 900 was involved in counter espionage and intelligence collecting. This is separate from what we've just talked about, on a par with MI6, and I really wasn't expecting to uncover this. It's a very exciting development and I'd like to see MI9 recognised and studied more for the intelligence impact that it had, because you look at the volumes of this material and you think this has to have had an impact. It feeds very importantly into the wider intelligence picture and all those deception operations of World War II.

MI9 seems to have concocted all sorts of curious escape aids hidden away inside everyday items. What are some of your favourites?

For me, it has been a Monopoly board. We all grew up as children playing Monopoly, depending on the era we were in, but it's a household game and cross-generational. Games would be played for hours at Christmas when I was young, and at that time I didn't know the history of MI9 and Monopoly. But I loved that part of MI9's history when I first read about it, how ingenious it was. It was exciting to discover that MI9 was actually able to smuggle stuff in the board itself, as it did with other games like chess and ludo.

LEFT
Wartime photograph of Renata Faccincani della Torre, who helped the Allies with an escape line running through Northern Italy

BELOW
The earliest known photograph of the Comet Line, July 1941, who helped airmen evade capture in and around Brussels

Image source: Courtesy Vanessa Clewes

Image source: Courtesy the de Greef family

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EXPERT BIOS

MARINA MONTESANO

Marina Montesano is a full professor of medieval history at DICAM, University of Messina, Italy. Her books include *Classical Culture* and *Witchcraft in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*.

JAN MACHIELSEN

Dr Jan Machielsen is a senior lecturer in Early Modern History at Cardiff University. He is currently working on a chapter for a new book on the history of the Devil.

THE HISTORY OF THE DEVIL

From Marlowe to Milton, we shed light on the Prince of Darkness and the origins of Satan himself...

Written by Callum McKelvie

For centuries Satan has been the ying to God's yang, but there is more to the fallen angel than meets the eye. From ancient religions such as Zoroastrianism to John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, all have played important roles in crafting the figure of The Beast, or in tweaking the narrative by introducing new and compelling elements.

"The Devil, as God's opponent, has always played an important role in Christian thought," Jan Machielsen, senior lecturer in Early Modern History at Cardiff University, explains. "The *New Testament* mentions cases of demonic possessions, while saints' lives from the Middle Ages describe the Devil as a tempter who sought to lead the pious saints into a life of sin."

Yet where does the idea of the Devil come from? Satan, Lucifer, The Prince of Darkness – all have preoccupied theologians, scholars, artists and writers since the fallen angel's initial conception. Beneath the image of the Devil as a man with red horns, a pointy beard and a pitchfork, we find a rich

mythology that has been crafted and perfected over centuries.

When examining the original Hebrew *Bible*, one might initially be surprised at how little the Devil features, if indeed he is present at all. In the *Old Testament* the word 'Satan' is used in its original Hebrew form, which is closer to the modern word 'adversary' and doesn't refer to the name of a single being. For example: "Appoint a wicked man against him, let an accuser [Satan] bring him to trial."

Mariana Montesano, professor of Medieval History at the University of Messina, Italy, explains: "In the biblical text 'Satàn' means 'adversary', 'obstacle', 'enemy', and takes on different connotations according to the passages and interpretations. Sometimes it's referred to human enemies, in other cases it's supernatural entities that can also be angels of Yahweh."

What's more, much of what we now consider to be part of the narrative of Lucifer is not present in these early texts. For instance, while we now align the serpent who tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden with Satan, in the Hebrew *Bible* no such name is given to the creature. Similarly, the *Book of Isaiah* contains the passage: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations." This is often considered to be a direct reference to God's casting out of Satan from heaven. "Lucifer, the 'morning star', is the expression with which Isaiah defines a future king of Babylon," says Montesano. "The fathers of the early medieval church, however, elaborated the figure of Lucifer far beyond the biblical text, making him the rebel angel and transforming him into the paradigm of pride as the capital sin."

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Yet already at the time of Isaiah's writings, the influence of the ancient Persian religion of Zoroastrianism had begun to introduce the concept of dualism into the Hebrew religion. Francois De Blois describes the central conflict at the heart of Zoroastrianism as, "personified in the struggle between the supreme God Ahura Mazda (Middle Persian Ohrmazd) and the supreme demon Angra Mainyu (Middle Persian Ahriman)."

This idea of two forces, one for good and one for evil, was important in contemporary reinterpretations of the Hebrew belief, so when Christianity was formed it became almost central to this new religion. As William Cadwell in a 1913 paper eloquently put: "In reaching the *New Testament* we are struck by the unitariness, clearness and definiteness of the outline of Satan. A bold, brazen personality confronts us on almost the first page." Here Lucifer appears under many names, including 'Devil', now the most common name for the entity. Most famously, he appears as a figure who tempts Jesus during his 40 days and 40 nights in the desert (*Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:2-13* and *Luke 4.1-13*), but it is in the *Book of Revelations* that much of the mythology of Lucifer is dictated.

Among this mythology is the concept of the 'War in Heaven' and Lucifer as an angel who once led a rebellion against God and the forces of good, an idea which John takes care to clearly define. *Revelation 12.7-10* states: "And there was war in Heaven, Michael and his Angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down – that ancient serpent called the Devil, or Satan, who leads the world astray." It is also here that, for the first time, Satan and the Serpent in the Garden of Eden are

The Changing Face of Satan

Some of the more popular or unusual portrayals of the Prince of Darkness throughout the centuries

Martin Luther is Taught by the Devil

Media: *Painting* **Year:** *c.1600*

During the Reformation, those who preached its concepts found themselves the subjects of propaganda and paintings which portrayed them as being either the Devil's instruments or his disciples. This cartoon from around 1600 shows Martin Luther as being the Devil's student.

Suffragist Chasing The Devil

Media: *Cartoon* **Year:** *1900*

The Devil has long been used as the subject of satirical cartoons, illustrating political adversity and often being used as a comparison for movements or contemporary political figures. In this 1900 example he is being chased by a Suffragette who carries a placard stating: "Votes for Women."

alluded to have been one and the same. *Revelations* also speaks of Satan's abode, Hell, which for centuries would be used to scare sinners into repenting: "The Devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur." *Revelations* redefines much of what had come before, placing these events as the centre of a vast war between good and evil. As lecturer in New Testament Studies, Kayle De Wall, states: "The cosmic conflict is the primary background against which the *Book of Revelation* must be understood," adding, "At the heart of this conflict is a struggle for universal supremacy between God and Satan."

If the *Book of Revelations* is responsible for much of the mythology surrounding Lucifer, the medieval period saw the Devil develop further than ever before, firstly through the concept of 'Necromancy'. "Hellenistic theurgy is a key element of Christian demonology, necessary to understand the main developments of the Devil in the following centuries," Montesano explains. Put simply, this was an ancient magical practice of summoning or evoking the presence of a daimōn. Montesano says these daimōn's were not necessarily evil or malevolent in nature, simply, "a spirit guide or a minor divinity with whom it is possible to get in touch." These ideas, surviving in a Christian context where God cannot be bent to man's will, were reinterpreted as conjuring evil creatures who allowed themselves to be summoned in order to deceive and corrupt. "In Christianity it takes on a much more negative value mingling with the Satan of the Gospels," says Montesano. There was already evidence to support this reinterpretation. "The necromantic art was described and classified already by the most ancient Christian sources," she

ABOVE A 1480 depiction of the war in heaven, as portrayed in the *Book of Revelations*

OPPOSITE-TOP Faustus and Mephistopheles as portrayed on the title page of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*

OPPOSITE A memorable depiction of the Devil presenting St Augustin with the *Book of Vices*, far closer to a recognisable depiction of a demon

© Alamy

"The Devil, as God's opponent, has always played an important role in Christian thought"

continues, "Lactantius (c.250 – c.317 CE) counted it among the activities with which the Devil deceives men. The episode of the evocation of Samuel by the necromancer of Endor provided the excellent prototype of any necromantic operation."

Necromancy was not the only key development during the Middle Ages, it is in this period that Lucifer gains a more concrete physical image. "During medieval times, dragons are commonly associated with the Devil in both hagiography and chivalric literature: like the dragon slayed by Pope Sylvester I to convert the pagan priests and the Emperor Constantine," Montesano explains. While fictional creatures were regularly associated with the Devil, so too were numerous animals. "We find foxes, bears, lions and many others having connotations that can signify those attributed to the Devil," Montesano continues. Yet once again (and similar to other aspects of the developing mythology) artists depicting Satan's appearance began to draw on earlier, pre-Christian religions. "A sixth-century mosaic from Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, Italy, shows the Devil as an ethereal blue angel, ultimately shed in favour of a more demonic appearance with

Satan Arousing the Rebel Angels by William Blake

Media: *Painting* **Year:** *1808*

Commissioned by Thomas Butts to create a series of watercolours illustrating John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Blake's portrayal is striking in how he respects Milton's text and portrays Satan as an Adonis. He based his figures on classical works by Michaelengalo, bringing to mind such portrayals of beauty as *David*.

The Devil Rides Out by Dennis Wheatley

Media: *Novel* **Year:** *1934*

Dennis Wheatley became known for his 'black magic thrillers' such as *The Devil Rides Out*, which was later turned into a 1968 film by Hammer studios. In the book, a black magician aims to use the powers of darkness to start a war with Nazi Germany – this plot was edited out of the film.

The Omen

Media: *Film* **Year:** *1976*

Richard Donnor's 1976 horror film was beset by accidents during its making, causing many of the cast and crew to speculate that it was cursed. The film reinterpreted the *Book of Revelations* as a political thriller. Most striking, however, was its portrayal of the Antichrist as a five-year-old.

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animalistic traits," Montesano says. "Like Lilith, who comes from ancient Babylonian Lilitu demons, winged females who flew through the night, seducing men and attacking pregnant women and infants."

Lilith was not alone in being 'retconned' as part of the Satanic mythology. Another ancient deity who became associated with Satan was Beelzebub, which translates roughly as 'Lord of the Flies'. Yet while we are beginning to see a Devil more recognisable to the one we're now familiar with, there's still at this stage a conspicuous missing element – the association of the Devil as a goat-like figure. "The goat, which until then was barely linked to demonology, assumed a new role," explains Montesano. "According to some scholars, this comes mainly from its association with Nordic myths, others say it might derive from the pagan god Pan, while Ronald Hutton [historian and author of *The Witch: A History of Fear, From Ancient Times To The Present*] thinks it has more to do with neo-pagan revival of modern – not medieval – times."

In the 14th century we see one of the first of a number of works of literature that would further inform our understanding of who and what the Devil was and, in this case, what the kingdom of hell was like. *The Divine Comedy,* more commonly known as '*Dante's Inferno*', is widely considered one of the most important pieces of medieval poetry. Composed by Dante Alighieri, the poem purports to be the author's own trip through Hell, before coming face to face with the Devil himself. Compared to the more elegant portrayals that would come much later, Dante's Devil takes a great deal from the medieval portrayals. Like those earlier works, this Satan is a humongous beast with various animalistic elements, frozen at the very centre of Hell. For example, the creature has "two mighty wings, such as befitting were so great a bird; sails of the sea I never saw so large. No feathers had they, but as of a bat."

Dante also crucially continues to introduce elements from Greco-Roman mythology into more traditional Christian lore. For instance, the Devil is referred to as Dis, the name for the Greek god of the underworld: "Hence in the smallest circle, where the point is of the Universe, upon which Dis is seated. Whoe'er betrays for ever is consumed."

"What is really new is the idea of the demonic pact," Jan Machielsen explains when asked about how the Devil evolves in the early modern period. "This idea that the Devil could form a pact with human beings gradually gets developed during the 14th and 15th century. And it underpins elite beliefs about witchcraft. How could an old illiterate woman have such fearsome powers? The answer is, she didn't, the Devil worked his power for her. This was something of diabolical win-win: the Devil got to do evil but he also gained the witch's soul."

This idea is perhaps most famously represented in Christopher Marlowe's 1589 play *Dr Faustus*, itself based on an earlier German legend believed to have been inspired by Johann Georg Faust. "It's the story of a learned university scholar who makes a pact with the Devil in exchange for secret knowledge and power," Machielsen explains. "It's a tragedy. The play ends when Faustus' time is up and he gets snatched and dragged down to Hell." This narrative of making a pact with a Devil but losing your soul in the process becomes an important moral in many subsequent portrayals of the Devil. Yet while the idea of the 'demonic pact' was a new addition to the mythology of Satan, much remained the same. "With hard-line Protestants, the idea of the Devil as a tempter remained," Machielsen explains. "For them, the Devil was just that voice in the back of your head that was just questioning whether you really had to do your prayers."

One of the most enduring and significant portrayals of the Devil came in 1667, when John Milton published the first version of *Paradise Lost* comprising ten books, which he later expanded to 12. Milton stated the purpose of the poem was to attempt to justify "the ways of God to men". However, one of its most interesting innovations was

SATANIC 70S

During the mid-20th century, Satan sold and Mephistopheles went mainstream

In the 1960s and 1970s the West was swept by a revival of interest in all things occult and a popular obsession with the satanic and the spooky. Almost the opposite side to the 'hippy movement', this mainstream fascination was later given the name of 'The Black Aquarius' by Historian Matthew Sweet. In Britain the black magic thrillers of Dennis Wheatley were reprinted and very quickly became bestsellers. Wheatley, an author who had made his name in the 1930s, suddenly found himself selling six million copies of his books a year. Soon the Devil was at the centre of a wealth of popular media, from blockbuster films like *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist*, to even appearing as the villain in a 1971 episode of *Doctor Who*.

In America, the satanic obsession became even more heated. In 1966, the same year that *Time* magazine published their iconic 'Is God Dead?' cover, Anton LaVey (born Howard Stanton Levey) gained much publicity when he founded The Church of Satan. LaVey rejected Christian morality and the notion of family values which had dominated much of the US in the 1950s. Yet LaVey's Satanism was different to what was initially expected. At its core, this was not the worship of a dark being, the father of lies or the Antichrist, instead it was the complete embrace of the ego. He preached that individuals should not restrict themselves and rejected what he saw as Christian hypocrisy. LaVey quickly became something of an overnight sensation and The Church of Satan an international organisation.

The beauty of woman – the demon of darkness – the unholy union of "The Devil's Bride"!
THE DEVIL'S BRIDE
COLOR by DeLUXE
CHRISTOPHER LEE
CHARLES GRAY
NIKE ARRIGHI · LEON GREENE
PATRICK MOWER · GWEN FFRANGCON-DAVIES
SARAH LAWSON · PAUL EDDINGTON

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BELOW Walter Huston as Mr Scratch in the 1941 adaptation of T*he Devil And Daniel Webster*, a modern interpretation of the Faustian story
© Alamy

"AS THEOLOGY, LITERATURE, ART AND EVEN POLITICS HAVE DEVELOPED AND CHANGED, EACH HAS HAD A PROFOUND IMPACT ON THE EVOLUTION OF PORTRAYALS OF SATAN"

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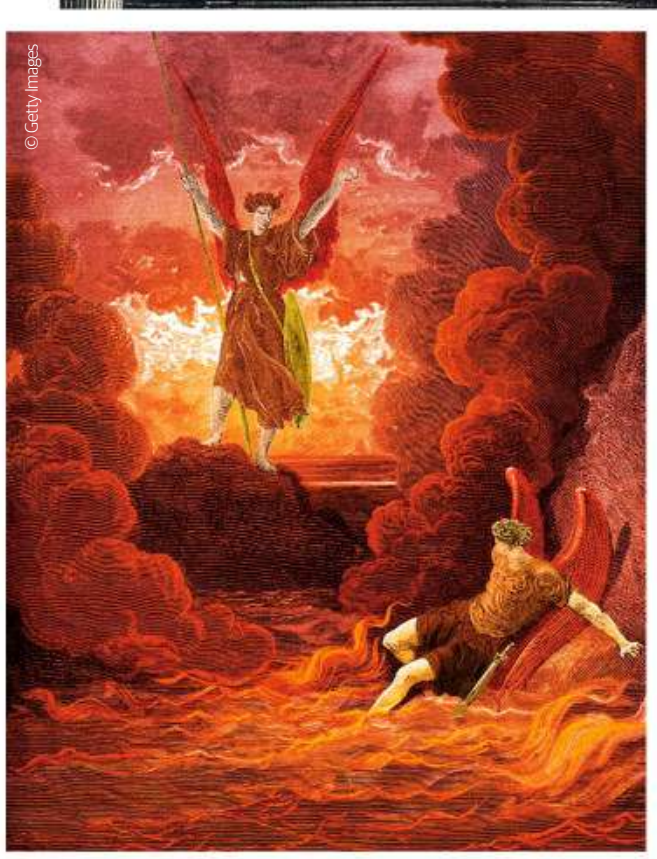
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in the way that Milton chose to portray Satan. *Paradise Lost* retells the story of the 'fall', of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, and cements the narrative that the Serpent was indeed Satan. Yet Milton's most celebrated achievement is not in expanding the mythology but in humanising Satan's motivation for these actions, causing many scholars to question whether or not Milton's Devil can be called a 'hero'. Milton's Satan is introspective, full of doubts and insecurities mixed with his pride, uttering the immortal line: "Better to reign in Hell, than to serve in Heaven."

Nancy Rosenfeld describes Milton's Satan in the introduction to her 2013 work *The Human Satan In Seventeenth-Century Literature* as "a heroic military leader" and as "the most attractive of the Satanic characters of seventeenth-century literature". Literary critic Christopher Ricks goes so far as to refer to the poem as "a fierce argument against God's justice". Later, in the 18th and early 19th century, there was a revival of interest in Milton, who was viewed as the founding figure of the Romantic movement. Artists and poets such as Percy Bysshe Shelley and William Blake found Milton's Satan so compelling that they both expanded upon the creation in their own poetry and paintings. Shelley even commented that: "Milton's Devil as a moral being... is far superior to God."

During the Edwardian and Victorian eras, despite the interest in science and scientific ideas, the revival of interest in the occult and the continued strength of the Christian church meant that the Devil was still seen as a very real threat. As Rhodri Hayward notes in his essay *Demonology, Neurology And Medicine In Edwardian Britain*: "Throughout the Victorian and Edwardian eras, demon possession and spirit obedience remained a very real problem for a number of British families." Contemporary folk legends, such as Spring Heeled Jack, were seen by some as modern sightings of devils and demons.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Devil continued to preoccupy writers and artists, many of whom used him as a means through which to make cultural or political statements. In 1938 the American poet Stephen Vincent Benet reinterpreted the Faustian legend as *The Devil And Daniel Webster* in which Satan was portrayed as the sinister Mr Scratch.

ABOVE
Gustave Doré's portrayal of Lucifer, or Dis, as he appears in *Dante's Inferno*

ABOVE-INSET
Illustration from Milton's *Paradise Lost* showing Satan having freed himself from the lake of fire and towering above Beelzebub

The titular Daniel Webster is a statesman and orator who argues the case of Jabez Stone (who sold his soul to Scratch) in front of a court made up of historic American villains. As with other famous reinterpretations, contemporary politics and satire helped make this narrative extremely popular and this version itself can be described as a popular piece of American folklore. In Russia during the reign of Stalin, Mikhail Bulgakov wrote *The Master And Margarita* in which the Devil appears as a mysterious stranger accompanied by a talking cat. The novel is a satire of an atheistic Soviet state and was not published until 1966, in a heavily censored version.

As theology, literature, art and even politics have developed and changed, each has had a profound impact on the evolution of portrayals of Satan. Even today, the Devil as a character continues to fascinate us, with television programmes such as *Lucifer* recasting the Prince of Darkness as a handsome nightclub owner who occasionally assists the police with tricky crimes. As the ultimate 'bad guy' it's doubtful if the Devil will ever truly go away, his horned visage and spikey pitchfork destined to fascinate theologians and artists alike until the end of days.

AURANGZEB
Conqueror of the World

After decades of prejudicial policies and endless conquest, Aurangzeb took the Mughal Empire to great heights, setting up a spectacular fall

Written by Hareth Al Bustani

© Alamy

In 1657 the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan presided over the world's wealthiest empire, sprawled across Afghanistan in the north and deep into southern India. Under his tenure the empire reached new heights of wealth, power and prestige, manifested in his magnificent architectural wonders such as the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and the sparkling new, white marble-clad city of Shahjanabad.

However, the emperor was deathly ill, and his four sons knew exactly what that meant. To the Mughals, succession was a bloody form of natural selection. The fact that Shah Jahan had already appointed his eldest son, Dara Shikoh, his heir meant nothing. If you were an emperor's son, as one Persian phrase put it, it was, "either the throne or the grave."

News of Shah Jahan's illness spread like wildfire. Based in the royal court, Dara boasted considerable administrative and martial experience and a huge army, ready to kill and die for his cause. Yet the same could be said of all his brothers, Shuga, the governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa; Aurangzeb, governor of the Deccan; and Murad, governor of Gujarat and Malwa.

In the ensuing civil war, Aurangzeb proved himself a remarkable general, allying with Murad to drive Dara from the capital of Agra and take it for himself. By now their father had made a miraculous recovery, but it was too late; Aurangzeb had already crossed the Rubicon, or in this case the River Chambal. Unwilling to step back, in an act of unthinkable cruelty he had his own father locked up in Agra's Red Fort, in a room overlooking the Taj Mahal, which Shah Jahan had built as a tomb for his favourite wife. To many, it was an illegitimate act of usurpation most unbecoming of a Muslim leader. To Aurangzeb, it was simply a rite of passage – his birth right.

RIGHT Aurangzeb remains a deeply divisive figure in Indian history to this day

Image source: wiki/Gallica Digital Library

BELOW A painting from c.1637 shows the brothers (left to right) Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad Baksh in their younger years

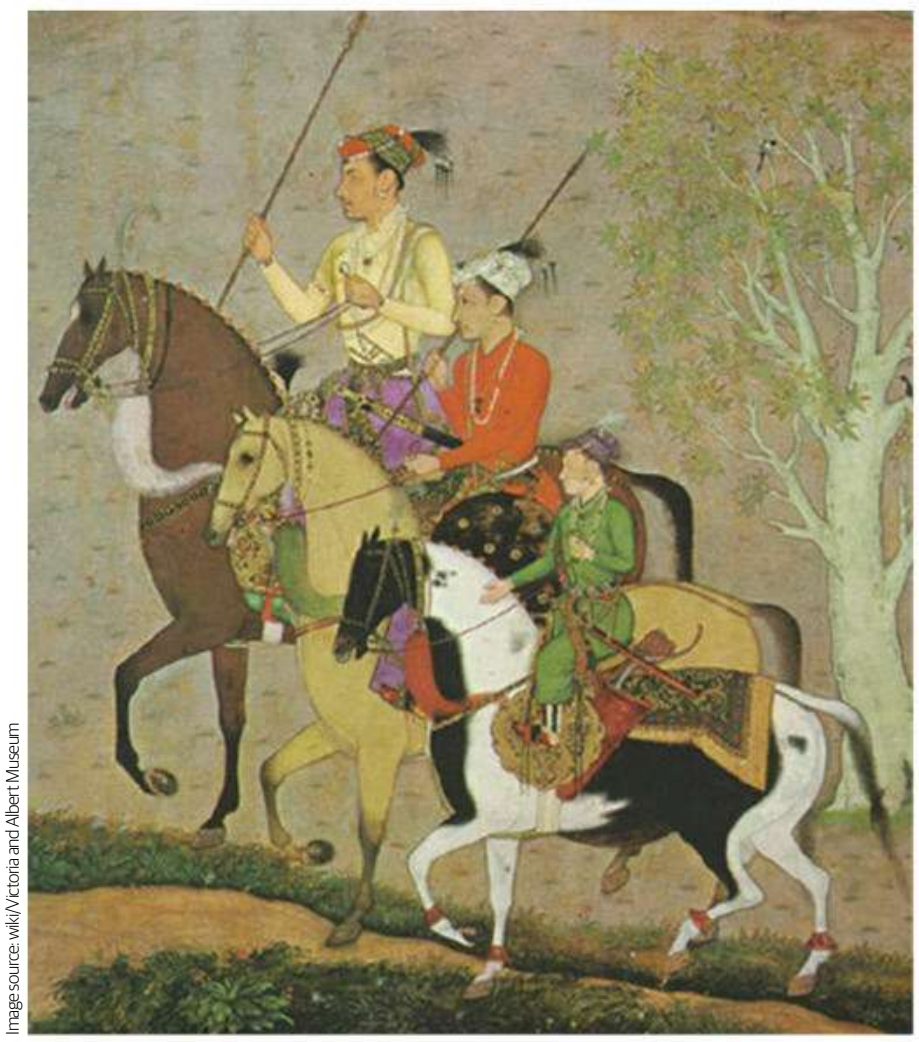
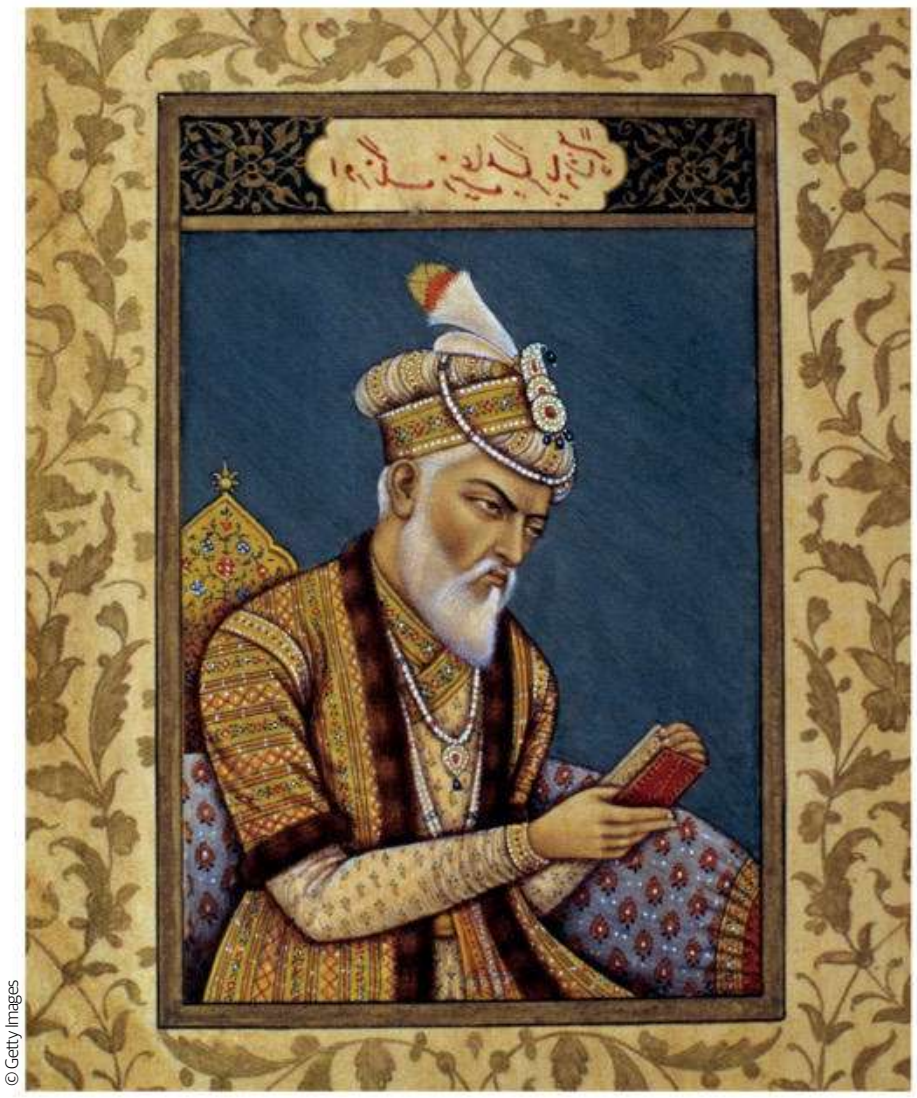


Image source: wiki/Victoria and Albert Museum

> IF YOU WERE AN EMPEROR'S SON, AS ONE PERSIAN PHRASE PUT IT, IT WAS "EITHER THE THRONE OR THE GRAVE"

Having taken the capital Aurangzeb turned on Murad, taking him prisoner, and chased Shuja out of the empire to Burma, where he was later slaughtered by a local leader. Dara regrouped his army, only to be betrayed by one of his allies and delivered to Aurangzeb. Unwilling to leave any pretenders alive, Aurangzeb had both his captive brothers executed; accusing Dara of idolatry and apostacy, and Murad of murder. When their sister tried to intervene on Dara's behalf, Aurangzeb spat back, "Dara is an infidel." Aurangzeb sent Dara's bloody head to his father as a gruesome symbol of his victory; though tens of thousands of men had perished on blood-drenched battlefields, the empire was his now.

Despite his success, for overthrowing his own father Aurangzeb was accused by various Asian Muslim leaders of violating Islamic law and values. One of his generals even stormed into the palace and hurled his sword to the floor, until the emperor won him back over with his characteristically calm charisma. Going forwards, he declared that piety would be one of the four pillars of his rule, alongside power, justice and kingship. Though he had certainly projected power, he had some lost piety to make up for.



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ABOVE The sixth Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb devoted his reign to the pillars of justice, power, piety and Mughal kingship

Just a year after seizing the throne, Aurangzeb began recruiting censors of public morals in every major city, drawn from the religious clergy. For all his ruthlessness, he wanted to prove his piety by rolling out Sharia Islamic Law across the entire empire, and placing strict bans on practices forbidden in Islam, such as drinking or gambling in public. He even donated vast fortunes to the Sharif of Mecca, for the upkeep of holy places in the Hejaz.

Going further, he not only devoted seven years of his life to memorising the Holy Qur'an, but transformed the entire court. While the Mughal court had long been defined by opulence and grandeur, Aurangzeb was less interested in such overt displays of wealth. He not only began to tone down his bejewelled attire, but increasingly covered the costs of such luxuries by sewing and selling prayer caps in his spare time. Instead of expressing prestige through colossal architecture, as Akbar and Shah Jahan had, he patronised the production of the comprehensive collection of Islamic legal codes, known as Al-Fatawa Al-'Alamgiriyya.

Though many elites indulged in alcohol, marijuana and opium, some even drinking themselves to death, Aurangzeb abstained from any intoxicants. Although he dressed his prized Uzbek hounds in red velvet, he considered hunting a waste of time, and kicked the musicians out of his court. On one occasion, a eunuch accidentally knocked the emperor over, and immediately fell to his knees in terror. The emperor calmly said, "Wherefore fearest thou a created being, one like thyself... rise and be not afraid." Yet, for all his supposed modesty, he never visited his father, nor did he attend his funeral when he finally perished in 1666.

His emphasis on Muslim piety also had a somewhat jarring effect on much of the

IN AN ACT OF UNTHINKABLE CRUELTY, HE HAD HIS OWN FATHER LOCKED UP IN AGRA'S RED FORT, IN A ROOM OVERLOOKING THE TAJ MAHAL.

Meet the Mughals

Descended from Timur and Genghis Khan, the Mughals created one of the world's wealthiest and most powerful empires

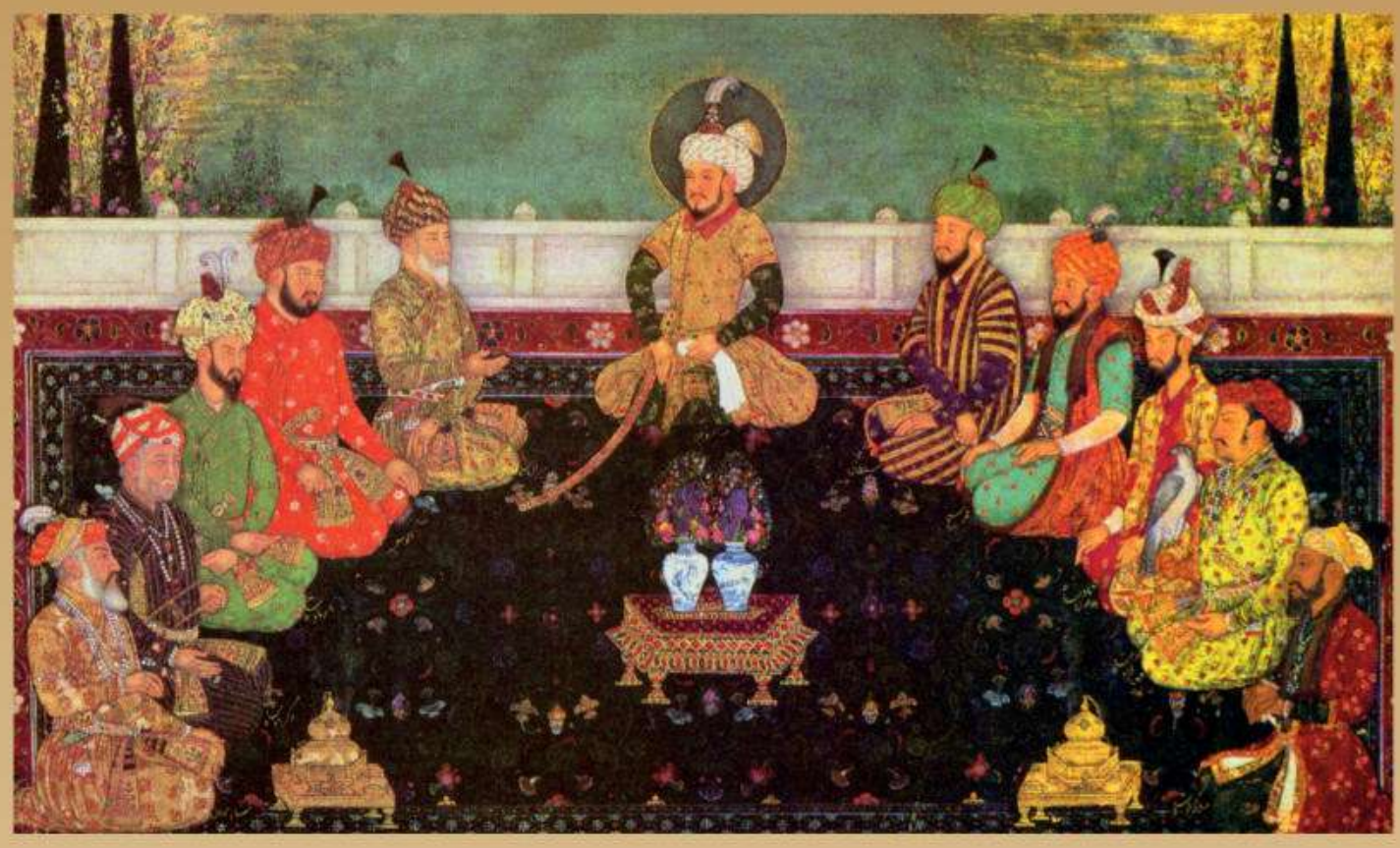
In 1494, the 12-year-old Babur was appointed the leader of Ferghana, in Turkestan. When he was deposed by elder relatives, Babur fled south, capturing Kabul in 1504. From there, he invaded the Indian subcontinent, defeating the Sultan of Delhi's much larger army at the Battle of Panipat in 1526, before conquering Delhi and Agra.

Descended from Genghis Khan on his maternal side, and Timur on his paternal side, Babur's descendants would later be termed the 'Mughals', an Arabic and Persian corruption of 'Mongol'. Although his son Humayun was a less capable ruler, his grandson, Akbar, who rose to the throne at just 13 years old, presided over a remarkable half-century of prosperity.

Backed by heavy artillery, Akbar smashed his way south of the Narmada River into the Deccan Plateau, dramatically expanding the empire with the conquests of Bengal, Gujarat and the Rajput kingdoms. Ruling over an enormous, and diverse, population, he pursued secular policies, abolishing discriminatory taxes and incorporating Hindus into the aristocracy. Akbar also incorporated local dynasties into the empire by granting them official posts, in return for recognition of his supremacy.

Reasonable tax policies helped expand the taxpayer base, making the empire fabulously wealthy, while patronage of the arts and culture created a blossoming Indo-Persian tradition. Under his successor Jahangir, the empire grew increasingly stable before reaching a pinnacle under the great builder Shah Jahan, who projected Mughal wealth, prestige and power with magnificent architectural wonders like the Taj Mahal.

After Aurangzeb died, the British East India Company gradually seized control of the subcontinent, reducing the Mughals to figureheads. The dynasty finally collapsed when Babur Shah II's failed uprising in 1857 resulted in his exile for sedition and treason.



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empire's 100 million residents, who were overwhelmingly non-Muslim. The land the Mughals ruled was an incredibly diverse tapestry of cultures, religions, languages and social systems. Although the empire had unified systems of administration, coinage and an official language, there was no notion of shared citizenship. The only true semblance of shared culture was among the elites – the Persianised Muslim aristocracy, and the Brahmins, who sat atop the Hindu caste system. Even on a regional level, those who shared a language or religious group might not share a sense of identity.

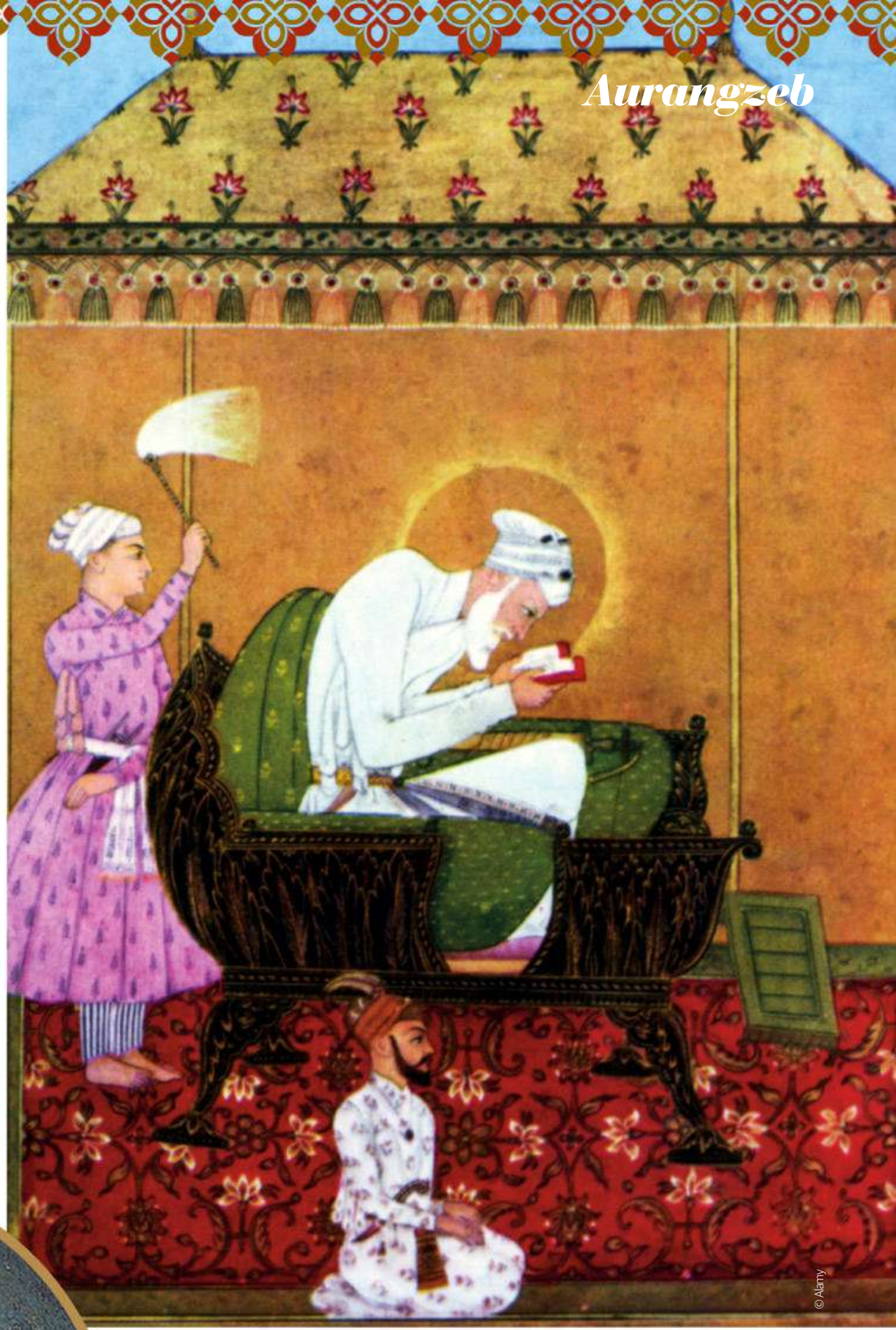
Yet while his predecessors had tried to unify this melting pot beneath secular governance, Aurangzeb was increasingly determined to enforce Islamic law on the entire empire. One of the first ways in which this policy began to bite was with a doubling of the 2.5 per cent duty that Hindu traders paid on goods. Things really escalated, however, in 1668, when Aurangzeb went against the advice of his nobles and theologians and reimposed the jizya poll tax on non-Muslims – 115 years after Akbar had abolished it. A year later he discontinued another long-standing policy: the act of darshan. This was a daily ritual stemming from ancient Hindu custom whereby every morning after prayer, as the sun rose, the emperor stood in an ornate bay window on the eastern palace wall and presented himself to the public. Aurangzeb considered it a form of idol worship and wanted no part of it.

He also denounced large public festivals as distasteful and, more importantly, dangerous to public order. The emperor not only attempted to curb the Diwali, Holi and Muharram celebrations, but the Muslim Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha festivals too. Although he maintained ties with the Sufi mystic community, he banned several controversial writings, such as those of the Muslim polemicist Ahmad Sirhindi.

In Punjab, the Sikh leader Guru Tegh Bahadur began to speak out against the emperor's destruction of the secular tradition, leading to unrest. Aurangzeb had Tegh Bahadur arrested and, when he refused to convert to Islam, had him summarily executed. Once again, the emperor displayed an uncanny hypocrisy – for all his calculated cruelty, he could be incredibly patient with ordinary people. He grew quite accustomed to abuse, with Sikhs throwing bricks at him, and poets hurling barbs – although he did try to bribe the latter into stopping. On one occasion, when he was on the way to the Jama Mosque for Friday prayer, a Sufi mystic lobbed a piece of faeces at him, and was remarkably allowed to go free.

However, the emperor could not contain, nor tolerate, the fury of Shivaji, chief of the Maratha, who used the emperor's religious overreach as a rallying cry to carve out an independent Hindu kingdom in the Deccan Plateau. Back when Aurangzeb and his brothers were still feuding, Shivaji seized on the chaos to amass a network of powerful allies, and an army of peasant pastoralists, riding atop light, fast horses. He rapidly carved out a realm of 130,000 square kilometres (50,000 square miles), spanning four per cent of the entire subcontinent, with a revenue one-fifth the size of Aurangzeb's. Surrounded by mountains and hillforts, he occupied one of India's best naturally fortified regions. ▶

RIGHT While Aurangzeb's reversal of Akbar's secular policies enraged many, others praised his commitment to memorising the Qur'an, living modestly, and covering his costs by hand-crafting and selling prayer caps



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ABOVE Flower imagery and interest in horticulture were incredibly popular in the Mughal Empire

Image source: wiki/The San Diego Museum of Art

FOR ALL HIS RUTHLESSNESS, HE WANTED TO PROVE HIS PIETY BY ROLLING OUT SHARIA ISLAMIC LAW ACROSS THE ENTIRE EMPIRE

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LEFT Aurangzeb's greatest foe was Shivaji, the Maratha ruler who dealt the Mughals three devastating humiliations, evading defeat until death and shattering the myth of Mughal invincibility

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RIGHT When Emperor Shah Jahan fell ill, his four sons immediately rushed into civil war, with the ruthless Aurangzeb emerging victorious

AURANGZEB SENT DARA'S BLOODY HEAD TO HIS FATHER AS A GRUESOME SYMBOL OF HIS VICTORY

Immediately after defeating his brothers, Aurangzeb sent his Deccan viceroy to nip the emergent Shivaji in the bud. However, after nearly three years of stagnation, the Mughals suffered a devastating loss, with the viceroy losing a son, thumb and many men. Then, in 1664, Shivaji sacked the fabulously wealthy port of Surat, stealing 10 million rupees and sending shockwaves through the Mughal Empire. The 20,000 defenders had simply fled in the face of Shivaji's 10,000 men. More than just a material loss, Surat was the gateway to the Red Sea and the main port where Muslims departed for the Hajj pilgrimage. Shivaji added insult to injury with a series of regular raids on pilgrim ships.

In 1665, Aurangzeb sent in his top general with a massive army and full diplomatic powers. Shivaji was finally defeated and forced into a peace treaty, handing over most of his strongholds and 80 per cent of his fort revenues. The Mughals were overjoyed at the victory. However, Aurangzeb was in a tight spot. Although he wanted to formally induct Shivaji into his empire, as Akbar had with the Rajputs, he knew there was no position he could offer the 'mountain rat' that would be accepted by both the proud Shivaji and his own fussy nobles, who considered the man a barbarian.

Eventually, those around the emperor convinced him to simply imprison Shivaji, the man who had plundered the Gateway to the Hajj. Yet, to everyone's horror, the elusive Maratha ruler escaped just months later, dealing Aurangzeb's reputation a brutal third humiliation, and shattering the facade of Mughal invincibility. He had no choice but to mobilise a massive force south.

In the ensuing decade, Shivaji locked the Mughals up in what the French traveller François Bernier described as "never-ceasing enterprises". Successive generals were sent, only to fail again and again. Even the Persian shah chastised the emperor, "You call yourself a Padishah (Emperor) but cannot subdue a mere zamindar (rural magnate) like Shiva. I am going to India with an army to teach you your business." The wily Shivaji's premature death in 1680 was met by the court with a bitter obituary: "The infidel went to Hell." Aurangzeb finally heaved a long-overdue sigh of relief, only to be interrupted by the uprising of the Rajputs of Jodhpur and Mewar, who, having seen the Mughals were not indestructible after all, declared independence from the empire.

ABOVE A dagger that belonged to Aurangzeb

Image source: wiki/Los Angeles County Museum of Art

The next year, 23 years into his rule, the 63-year-old emperor embarked on what would become an eternal series of conquests. He spent the next 26 years waging constant warfare, seizing new domains and besieging forts, until almost the entire Indian subcontinent was thrust beneath the Mughal yoke. His early victories over Bijapur and Golconda further fuelled his martial vigour. During the campaign, the emperor sent his son Akbar to head a great army, only for the wretch to declare himself emperor, and ally with Shivaji's son, Sambhaji. Aurangzeb led the assault on his own son personally, driving him into exile in Persia. When he captured Sambhaji in 1689, having never had the opportunity to unleash his rage against his father, he had him brutally tortured and torn to pieces by metal claws. However, as time went on, the victories slowed down.

Aurangzeb spent the last few decades of his life in military tents, fighting to take

Aurangzeb: Temple destroyer?

Although Aurangzeb's religious policies were prejudicial, they were tempered by a commitment to the law

Aurangzeb has been demonised as a bigoted, anti-Hindu temple destroyer, remembered in the same breath as the prolific demolisher Mahmud of Ghazni. A member of India's Hindu nationalist BJP party in Rajasthan recently called for National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks to remove materials "glorifying" Aurangzeb. One activist even lodged a legal notice against NCERT, for claiming that after destroying temples Aurangzeb often gave them grants to rebuild.

However, this is a form of historic revisionism, more suited to stoking anti-Muslim sentiments among modern Hindu nationalists than accurately depicting Aurangzeb's policies. Although he may have torn down dozens of temples, there is no evidence he did so indiscriminately. On the contrary, the vast majority of the thousands of Hindu temples were left standing. When the Mathura's Keshava Rai temple was destroyed, for example, it may have been a specific punitive political response to the local Jat rebellion, rather than a general policy.

Although he ordered a recall of endowed lands from Hindus, this was very inconsistent. The emperor continued to grant land to Hindu temples associations and some areas, such as Bengal, saw grants accelerate. He also issued orders protecting Hindu and Jain temples, and did not allow officers to illegally persecute non-Muslims. Moreover, during the course of his reign, he increased the proportion of Hindu nobles by 50 per cent.

Aurangzeb was also unafraid to wage war on Shia Muslims where necessary, as he did with the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda. When these relentless sieges led to famine, Bijapuri theologians begged him to relent, claiming it was forbidden to fight fellow Muslims, but he persisted until they fell.

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central and southern India. Even when, in his 80s, he was too old to walk, he was carried from battlefield to battlefield upon a stunning palanquin covered in brocade and deep fringes of silk and gold – forgetting all else but his thirst for conquest. At either end of the litter were pairs of strongmen, and ahead walked a series of footmen, sprinkling water on the ground to keep the dust down.

By the time he was done, the empire spanned some 4.5 million square kilometres (1.7 million square miles). However, maintaining an army of 500,000 with 50,000 camels and 30,000 war elephants was not cheap. Every time it moved, bands of Maratha guerrillas attacked the stragglers to the rear, making off with what plunder they could. The financial burden of Aurangzeb's conquests largely fell upon the peasantry, who after decades of heavy taxation were squeezed beyond breaking point. Rebellions began to pop up all over the country, until new revolts were rising quicker than they could be suppressed. With Aurangzeb tied down in the Deccan wars, he was simply unable to keep track of all the rebellions rising in the farthest flung reaches of his enormous empire. Akbar's network of political alliances, the very foundation of the empire, were beginning to unravel.

In 1707, while camping in central Maharashtra, the emperor developed a severe fever. On 3 March, during his Friday prayers, after 49 years in power he slid into death. Although he added four new provinces, amounting to a quarter of the empire, he had long worried about its future, declaring, "After me, chaos." After his death, his sons immediately began fighting for control, but the victor Bahadur Shah was unable to control the unwieldy empire. Over the ensuing century, the empire steadily dissolved, before finally being conquered by the British East India Company. Many would later blame Aurangzeb for not only picking at the social fabric of his empire, but expanding it too far too soon.

ABOVE The second half of Aurangzeb's reign was marked by endless conquests, even against fellow Muslims

BELOW Consumed by his conquests, Aurangzeb continued to wage warfare into his 80s

EVEN WHEN, IN HIS 80S, HE WAS TOO OLD TO WALK, HE WAS CARRIED FROM BATTLEFIELD TO BATTLEFIELD UPON A STUNNING PALANQUIN, COVERED IN BROCADE AND DEEP FRINGES OF SILK AND GOLD

2x © Alamy

This painting by Charles de Steuben shows Henry IV encouraging his troops forward – note his famous white plumed helmet

Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF IVRY

NORTHERN FRANCE, 14 MARCH 1590

Written by Marc DeSantis

The Protestant Reformation had established itself elsewhere across Europe in the 16th century but hadn't made much headway into France until the emergence of Calvinism. Based in Geneva, the Calvinists sent missionary preachers to France, where they founded churches among their new adherents, who became known as the Huguenots.

Royal officials in France began to ruthlessly persecute the Calvinists because they saw them as a threat to the traditional order. One area where Calvinism enjoyed great success was in the Kingdom of Navarre in the south west of France, where Antoine de Bourbon reigned. Though Antoine was himself ambivalent about Protestantism, his wife and queen, Jeanne d'Albret, was a fervent Calvinist.

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HENRY OF NAVARRE

Into this world of split religious allegiances came Henry, born in December 1553. Growing up in Pau, the capital city of Navarre, the young prince of the House of Bourbon impressed his elders with his keen intelligence. Meanwhile religious civil wars engulfed France for nearly 40 years, starting in 1562. At Dreux, a royal (Catholic) army defeated a Huguenot force in battle. The heavy toll in lives did much to encourage the warring factions to do their best to avoid fighting pitched battles in the future. It did not, however, bring an end to the fighting.

In an attempt to heal the factional breach, Catherine de Medici arranged for her daughter Marguerite to marry Henry of Navarre on 18 August 1572, but this was followed just days later by the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Thousands of Huguenots were slain in Paris by Catholic mobs, and Henry was given a stark choice: convert to Catholicism or die. Henry chose life, and for several years lived outwardly as a Catholic. However, in 1576 he managed to escape from King Henry III's court, and resumed his life in Navarre as a Huguenot champion.

In January 1589, Henry III had Henry, the Duke of Guise assassinated, infuriating and energising the rest of the Catholic League he had been the led. The king now desperately sought the support of the same Huguenots whom he had been trying to suppress. He declared Henry of Navarre to be his heir, and not long afterward, in August 1589, Henry III was himself slain by an assassin's blade. Henry of Navarre was thus named king as Henry IV, despite his Protestantism.

WAR IN THE AGE OF HENRY IV

By the early 16th century, infantry had regained much of the prominence in battle that it had lost after the fall of Rome. Operating in large squares, pikemen would fend off enemy cavalry with their long weapons, while the arquebusiers interspersed among them blasted them with lead shot. The arquebusiers would then retreat into the safety of the pike square while they reloaded. Horsemen still retained their role as shock cavalry.

European armies had begun to supplement their armoured lancers with the reiter, a more practical kind of light cavalryman armed with a pistol and a sabre. Typical reiter tactics involved galloping up to the enemy, firing their pistols and then returning to the rear ranks of the formation to reload. This caracole, as it was called, was not altogether

"Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are! And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre." These are first two lines of Thomas Macaulay's poem on the battle

© Getty Images

decisive as it usually only worked once one side saw that it was losing and beat a hasty retreat. Henry would make his mark by introducing a twist to reiter tactics. In his pistolade, he would have his troopers fire their pistols just once and then charge straight into hand-to-hand combat with their sabres instead of performing the time-consuming caracole.

THE DUEL FOR FRANCE

Henry had to balance a fractious coalition composed of his old Huguenot supporters and the new Catholic adherents, whose support he would need if he were ever actually to sit on his throne. Some, however, would not be reconciled to a Protestant monarch, and these men left the royal court for their own domains.

The royal army of 40,000 men, which was now Henry's own, dwindled quickly to just 18,000. There were some who wanted him to go back to the Huguenot stronghold in the south of France, but others cautioned against such a defensive move. Winning the throne would require a more aggressive strategy. Henry next moved north into Normandy, seeking to open a line of communications with England, which was itself Protestant and ruled by Elizabeth I, who had sent considerable aid to Henry. In August 1589, he captured the port city of Dieppe and began to fortify it.

In September, he was pursued north by Charles, Duke of Mayenne, the younger brother of the murdered Henry, Duke of Guise, who was now the leader of the Catholic League's forces. Mayenne's army was big and powerful, composed of League troops, Swiss and Landsknecht mercenaries, and Spanish troops detached from the Army of Flanders in the Netherlands. All told, Mayenne had some 20,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry under his command. Seeing the strength of the fortifications that Henry had thrown up around Dieppe, Mayenne chose to advance along a defile, past the village of Arques, towards the city. Henry had fortified this approach with two trench lines to be manned by his much smaller army of 8,000. On the foggy morning of 21 September, Mayenne advanced along the road into the narrowed space of the defile, thereby ceding the advantage that his more numerous force should have enjoyed.

A unit of German mercenary infantry turned the flank of the first trench and Henry's men retreated in disorder towards the second line. Mayenne's cavalry now charged through the gaps in the trench line. At the head of his small force of just 1,000 reiter cavalry, Henry counterattacked the League horsemen in the tight confines of the defile, while his arquebusiers fired into their close-packed ranks. The outcome was in doubt for more than an hour as the cavalry of each side charged and counter-charged, with the League advance barely halted by the Swiss infantry of Henry's second line. But when the thick fog lifted, the cannon of the nearby castle of Arques fired on the Leaguers, who quickly retreated out of range of the artillery.

The Battle of Arques was not particularly costly for either side – Mayenne lost 600 men and Henry 200. Finding no way to get at Dieppe with Henry present, and with a royalist army approaching, Mayenne withdrew on 6 October. Henry remained in Normandy, and in a hugely successful campaign he brought almost the whole of the province under his control.

BATTLE IS JOINED

In March 1590, Mayenne rode north again to bring Henry – who was himself besieging Dreux – to battle. The king was determined to fight a pitched battle, a rarity during the religious wars. He had some 3,000 cavalry and 8,000 infantry at his command, while the Catholic League army was smaller than it had been at Arques, totalling about 4,000 cavalry and 15,000 infantry. Of Henry's royalist army, many were foreign troops.

On 14 March, Henry's main army was arrayed for battle on the plain of Saint André between the towns of Ivry and Nonancourt. As this was open ground, neither Henry nor the Leaguers would have the benefit of fighting a defensive battle. It would be a straightforward engagement between two armies. Henry's plan was to destroy the Leaguers' left wing opposite him with his elite troops and he would, as always, lead the attack in person.

Reliance on mercenaries put Henry in an awkward position. Just before the start of the

Henry IV is depicted here entering Paris in 1594, some four years after his great victory at Ivry

© Getty Images

battle, the colonel of the German reiters, a man called Dietrich Schomberg, approached the king and requested that he pay his men's arrears in full. Henry, with the upcoming battle weighing heavily on his mind, caustically replied that a brave man would never ask for his money right before a battle. Afterwards, Henry regretted his sharp answer and asked for Schomberg's forgiveness, which was enough to bring the German to tears and elicit his firm insistence of his loyalty to Henry.

His army was deployed in some six corps. He had placed a unit of 300 cavalry under the Marshal d'Aumont on the far left of his line, with two regiments of infantry on its flanks. Next to them was a regiment of cavalry under Duke Montpensier, with Swiss pikemen and half a regiment of French arquebusiers on its right. On its left was a regiment of 400 German landsknechts. Two groups of light cavalry, totalling 400 horse, under the Bastard of Angoulême and the Sieur de Givry, formed the third corps. Set next to these units was the tiny royal artillery park of just five guns.

Moving rightward, next to this was a regiment of pistolier cavalry under the Baron de Biron, the son of the Armand, the Marshal Biron. These men were matched with a regiment of 800 infantry. The fifth corps – Henry's strongest and under his direct command – was composed of his best cavalry, four regiments of his Swiss mercenaries and three of his French infantry. As noted, he intended to break the enemy line with these troops. Anchoring the far right wing on the village of Saint André, was Schomberg's regiment of reiters. Behind the main line, forming a meagre reserve, were a small body of 150 cavalry and two regiments of infantry under the command of the Marshal Biron. Some skirmishers were also set ahead of the main line.

The Catholic League army was itself just as formidable, and larger too. On the far right wing, light cavalry and heavy cavalry were reinforced by landsknechts and Swiss foot under Charles, Duke of Nemours. Walloon lancer cavalry came next, supported by some French foot. These were under the command of Philip of Egmont. Beside these was the League artillery. Next to the guns was a regiment of reiters commanded by Eric of Brunswick. These were backed up by Swiss and French infantry. Next to the reiters were 700 lancers under Mayenne's direct command, and beside them, 400 mounted Spanish arquebusiers. Forming the far left of the League's line was a contingent of French cavalry under Charles, Duke of Aumale. These were supported by Walloon and French infantry.

The battle commenced as the armies marched towards each other warily, with Henry moving his army to the left to attain the advantage of the sun and the wind. The bigger of the League army's line extended further than either wing of the royalists, and it was probably Mayenne's intention to outflank Henry's army on both sides.

When they were close enough, Henry ordered his artillery commander to open up on the Leaguers.

THE ROYALISTS

Image source: wiki/Frans Pourbus the Younger

HENRY IV OF FRANCE

Victory at Ivry led inevitably to the end of the Wars of Religion, but Henry's reign was still fractious in other ways, not least after he converted to Catholicism to maintain his hold on the throne. At least 12 assassination attempts were made on him, finally killing him in 1610. He was succeeded by Louis XIII.

Image source: wiki/photo.rmn.fr

ARMAND DE GONTAUT, BARON DE BIRON

The marshall of France had distinguished himself as a commander over many years before supporting Henry of Navarre's claim to the French throne. Early in the Wars of Religion he had led a cavalry regiment, but by the end of the war he had been made a privy councillor and grand master of artillery before taking up the marshal role, a title both his son and grandson would also earn.

Image source: wiki/Sotheby's

ELIZABETH I OF ENGLAND

Supporting the Protestant king of France from across the channel, Elizabeth sent £200,000 and some 70,000 pounds of gunpowder, ammunition, and other supplies to support Henry's mission. She also sent Henry troops for his attack on Paris on 1 November but this, like many other English attempts to aid Henry, failed in the short term.

CATHOLIC LEAGUE

Image source: wiki/Jaconde Database 07140001018

CHARLES, DUKE OF MAYENNE

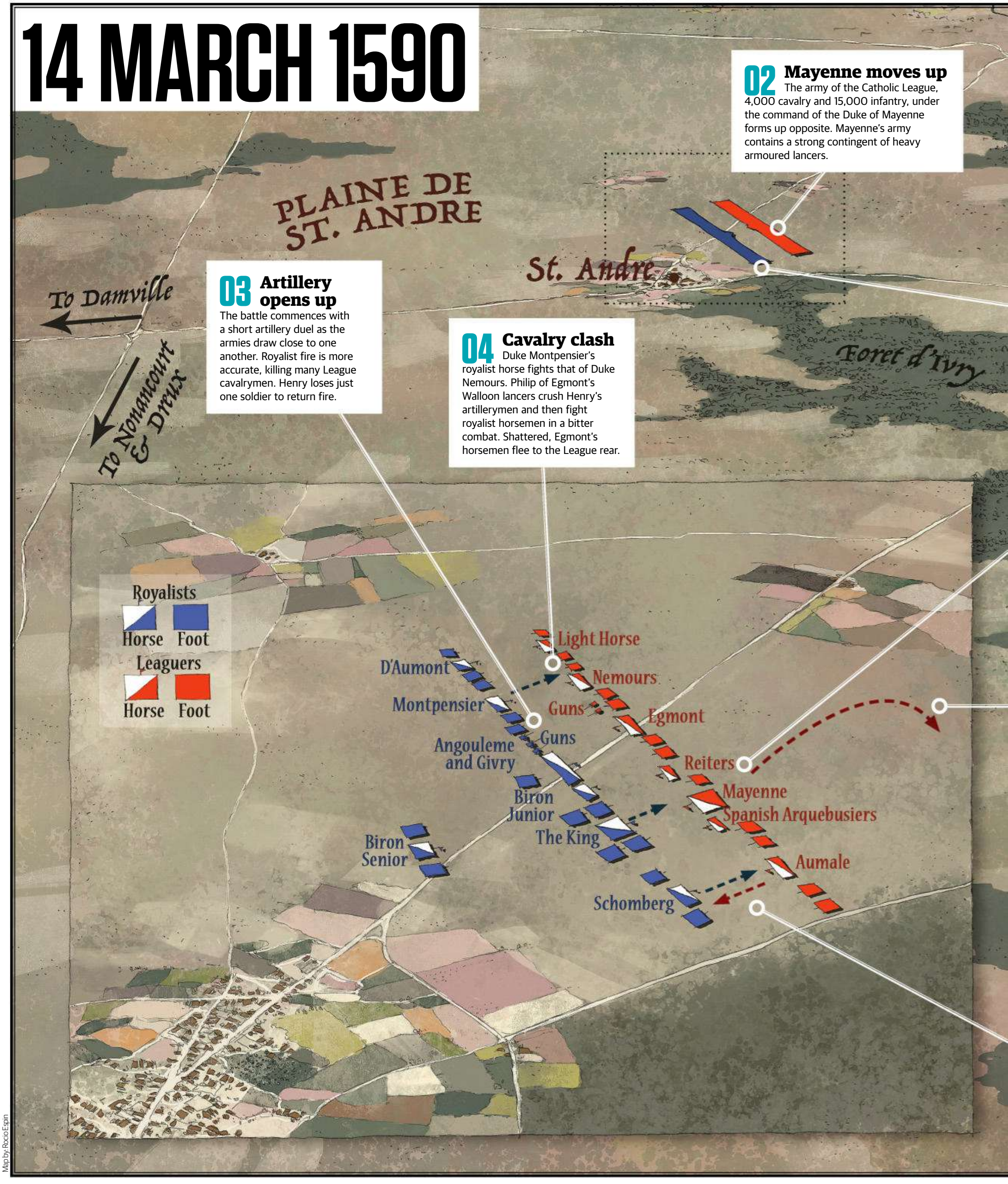
After his defeat at Ivry, the Duke of Mayenne sought refuge in Mantes and built up his forces to prevent Henry IV from taking Paris. While he succeeded, infighting and extremist views within the Catholic League seem to have pushed him towards seeking peace rather than further conflict, eventually finding an agreement in 1596 to end the Wars of Religion.

Image source: wiki/British Museum

CHARLES, DUKE OF AUMALE

The Duke of Aumale had led a rebellion in Picardy in 1587 that had been the prelude to the House of Guise breaking away from Henry III of France. It was this rift that set the Catholic League against the king of France, which only became more ferocious when he was succeeded by Henry IV. Charles was captured at Ivry and died in exile.

14 MARCH 1590



02 Mayenne moves up
The army of the Catholic League, 4,000 cavalry and 15,000 infantry, under the command of the Duke of Mayenne forms up opposite. Mayenne's army contains a strong contingent of heavy armoured lancers.

03 Artillery opens up
The battle commences with a short artillery duel as the armies draw close to one another. Royalist fire is more accurate, killing many League cavalrymen. Henry loses just one soldier to return fire.

04 Cavalry clash
Duke Montpensier's royalist horse fights that of Duke Nemours. Philip of Egmont's Walloon lancers crush Henry's artillerymen and then fight royalist horsemen in a bitter combat. Shattered, Egmont's horsemen flee to the League rear.

Map by: Rocio Espin

01 Henry deploys
Henry's royalist army of 3,000 horse and 8,000 foot establishes its line on the plain of Saint André running from Ivry to Nonacourt. Henry's cavalrymen are grouped in six blocks, with each flanked by regiments of infantry.

06 Caracole chaos
While performing the caracole, League light cavalry loses its commander and retreats to the rear of their line. As they do so, they get in the way of Mayenne's charging lancers, who are forced to come to a halt.

07 League cavalry retreats
Henry now charges Mayenne's immobilised cavalry and cleaves his way through them. Split asunder, the League cavalry flees from the field, which now belongs to Henry.

08 Bloody pursuit
In the ensuing rout, the surrenders of French and Swiss troops are accepted, but the foreign soldiers in service with the League are hacked down without quarter.

05 The reiters attack
On the royalist right, Schomberg's mercenary reiters fight Duke Aumale's cavalry. Supported by Marshal Biron and the royalist reserve, Aumale's horsemen are routed.

This early 17th-century armour belonged to Count Jean de Saulx Tavannes, an ally of the Catholic League

Image source: François de Dijon

The attack was savagely effective, mowing down numerous Walloon lancers and reiters to his fore. Mayenne's artillery was considerably less deadly, killing only one of Henry's soldiers. After this short barrage, the cavalry of both sides charged. The royalist cavalry, under Marshal d'Aumont, drove off the Catholic light cavalry opposite them. Montpensier's troops clashed with those of Nemours, and Egmont's Walloon lancers then charged the royalist light cavalry of the Bastard of Angoulême and the Sieur de Givry and routed them. Egmont then fell upon de Guiche's artillerists and slaughtered them. The Walloons were out of formation after all of this action, and were struck by the Baron de Biron's pistolier cavalrymen. The Walloons broke, and then rallied and reentered the fray. They were all but destroyed in the ensuing combat, and the few survivors found safety behind the Leaguers' main line.

On the right wing of Henry's army, Schomberg's mercenaries engaged in a furious combat with those of Aumale, and Schomberg was slain in the fighting. The scales were only tipped in favour of the royalists when Marshal Biron entered the fray with his reserve troops and defeated the Aumale's League cavalry.

The decisive fight would take place in the centre. Mayenne struck against the centre-left of Henry's line with his reiters on his right flank, his Spanish horse-arquebusiers on his left flank, and his lancers in the middle.

The horse-arquebusiers performed well, shooting dead Henry's ensign bearer and leaving many afraid that Henry had himself been slain. But the League reiters were hit hard by Henry's artillery, and then were shot up by some skirmishing arquebusiers, who they did not spot until it was too late. Their commander, Eric of Brunswick, was killed and after firing their pistols, instead of completing the caracole and firing again, they simply rode back to the League rear.

In their flight, they got in the way of Mayenne's lancers and the duke was forced to halt his charge while they passed. This left them very vulnerable to the charge of the royalist horsemen, with the very much alive Henry at their head. Henry's cavalry dispersed the Spanish and then struck Mayenne's stationary horsemen.

Lances were useless when not being used in the charge, and these were tossed aside by the Leaguers in favour of swords for close quarters action. Fifteen minutes of gory hand-to-hand fighting ensued until Henry hacked his way through the enemy. Mayenne's cavalry were put to flight, and sought the security of the rear of their line. The French and Swiss League troops were given quarter, but for the foreign troops, the landsknechts and the Walloons, there would be no such mercy. Losses to the Catholic League forces stood at 800 cavalry and 3,000 infantry, and several thousand men soon became prisoners. Henry's losses were much lighter, placed at some 500 killed in action. Ivry was a clear-cut victory for Henry.

What If...

THE FIRST CRUSADE HAD BEEN DEFEATED?

How might the history of the Middle Ages have been altered had this massive event gone in a different direction?

Written by David J Williamson

INTERVIEW WITH

© Jonny Ring

PETER FRANKOPAN

Professor of Global History at Oxford University, Director of the Centre for Byzantine Research and Senior Research Fellow at Worcester College. Author of *The First Crusade: The Call From The East*, and *The Silk Roads: A New History Of The World*

Who were the main forces behind the First Crusade?

The Byzantine Empire, centred around Constantinople, was a model in managing risk – one reason it had been so stable and successful for over half a millennium after the fall of Rome. In the late 11th century, however, a build-up of pressure for multiple sources brought the empire to its knees. The Emperor Alexios I Komnenos had taken his throne by military force in a coup in 1081, and as basically a usurper with no inherited authority his position was perhaps not as stable as many of his predecessors. And the deterioration of the position in Asia Minor was serious, in particular the loss of large, fortified cities to the Turks, thereby enabling them to cement their foothold in the region. The emperor needed large-scale support to recover those – and turned to the west for expertise as well as manpower. In 1095 he sent envoys to Pope Urban II, imploring him to help fellow Christians against the scourge of the Muslim threat. The Pope did not disappoint, and at the Council of Clermont in 1095 gave a fiery and passionate speech which would ignite crusading fever.

How significant is it that the first to respond was the 'People's Crusade'?

On the back of the religious fervour drummed up in passionate campaigning by both the pope and the French cleric Peter the Hermit, the population in Western Europe had been whipped up by news of the crisis in Byzantium and beyond and were responding to calls to do something about it. In military terms, however, the People's Crusade – made up of some knights but mainly ordinary devout Christians mixed together with the dispossessed, opportunists and the downright criminal and led by Peter – was totally insignificant. The People's Crusade was a disaster – chaotic, disorganised and foolhardy. A bit like a crowd of football hooligans on the rampage. It also had a very sinister and disturbing side. As this first wave of crusaders moved through Europe what could and should be done in the name of Christ was often ignored or excused away. In order to support themselves there was mass looting; in order to show their devotion to Christ there was the brutal massacre of several communities of Jews in Germany who were caught up in this fiery uncontrollable tide against all non-Christians. Such was the success, interpretation and effectiveness of the spread of the Crusade message in the mid-1090s.

Can the motives of either side be seen as purely religious?

Much depends on what one means by 'purely religious' or even by 'religious'.

Image source: wiki/ The Yorck Project

Main image source: © Getty Images

RIGHT
The Council of Clermont in 1095

Godfrey de Bouillon was one of the leading Christian figures of the First Crusade

THE PAST

1081-95

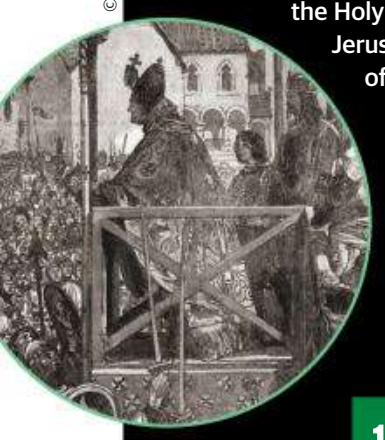
MILITARY PRESSURE IN THE EAST, A PERFECT STORM

The Byzantine Emperor Alexios was losing territory fast and was desperate to find some way of stopping the rot. Heavily fortified cities, that had once been his, were now being used against him by the Turks in order to bolster their advances and their ambitions as they pushed West. With the increase in pressure on his borders, despite relations between the Western and Eastern followers of Christianity being at something of a low ebb, his only option was to appeal to the West.

1095

THE REACH AND ENERGY OF THE CHURCH

Christianity permeated every corner of 11th century life in both the Byzantine Empire and Western Europe, and it was to be faith and belief that were to act as the catalyst for the forthcoming war on Islam. The rising ambitions of the papacy, and Urban II in particular, set the tone for the assistance to their fellow Christians in the East. The passion of oratory was intense, demonising the Turks through detailed, macabre and horrific descriptions of their treatment of Christians, plus the ultimate insult to Christ and Christianity – occupation by Islam of the Holy Land and Holy City of Jerusalem. With its network of priests and monks the message was carried throughout Europe, stirring up passion, anger and hatred that would call many to arms and 'follow the cross', because 'God wills it'.



© Alamy

1099

PILGRIMAGE

As the pinnacle of faith and devotion, it was believed that pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to Jerusalem was a cast iron guarantee of the cleansing of sins and acceptance into Heaven. The journey had always been fraught with incredible danger, but with the capture of Jerusalem, and the later establishment of the Levantine states under Christian control, such a journey of faith became more popular and more possible.

2x © Alamy

ABOVE The siege of Jerusalem 1099. Citizens were slaughtered after its capture

A lot of historians take ideas about faith and devotion on trust – and over-rely on charter documents and other primary sources that can easily result in over-simplifications or even mislead entirely. I think motivations are always problematic as they are usually complex and their interpretation highly subjective. And, of course, they could and did change before, during and after the Crusades for participants, observers and indeed people living far away too. The initial 'call to arms' for the Crusade was, on the surface at least, very much a message of defence of the Christian faith, but the underlying issues of land, power and influence were always very close to the surface.

LEFT The Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos

How different could the Byzantine Empire, Western Europe and future control of the Holy Land have looked if the Crusade had been defeated? And how ambitious could the Turks potentially have been?

That's relatively easy to answer because all the Crusades effectively did was to hold up the advances of the Turks for a few hundred years. By the late 1300s the Ottomans were deep into the Balkans, bypassing Constantinople (which they finally took in 1453) and over the next five centuries occasionally threatened to overspill far beyond too. Vienna could have fallen in 1529 or in 1683.

Ironically, the more interesting question here is a counter-intuitive one: would there have been an Ottoman Empire in the first place without the Crusades? In fact, what the western expeditions to the Holy Land did was to unify the Islamic world and to paper over the very substantial political, religious and ethnic cracks to pave the way for a true Mediterranean, African and Asian superpower. I doubt that could or would have happened without the intervention of the Crusades.

What consequences would defeat have had on the reputation of the pope, the church, and the military might of Western Europe? Were other individual reputations at stake?

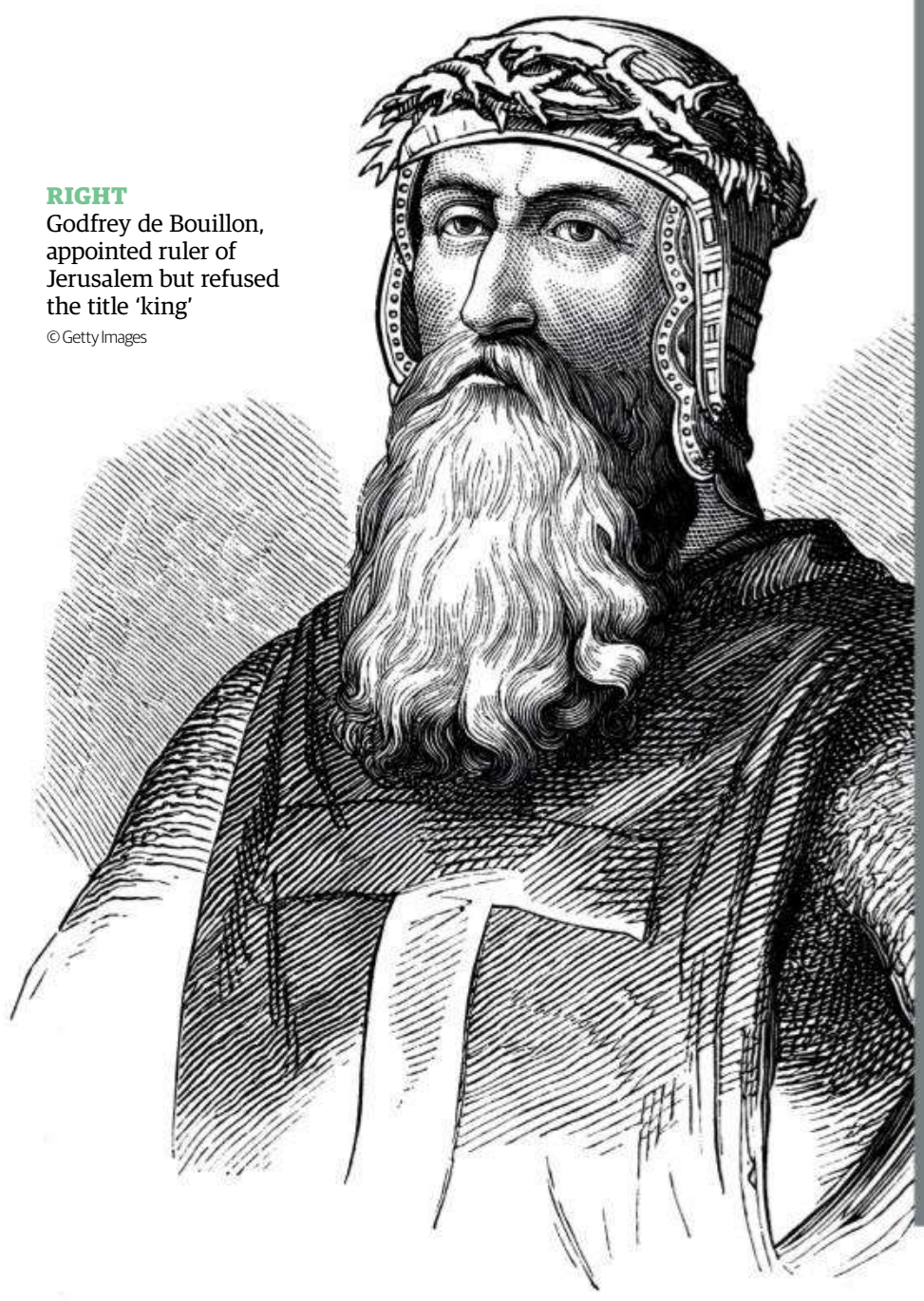
The Crusades were the making of Urban II and of the papacy in general. Had the expedition ended in defeat at Jerusalem in 1099, or not taken place at all, the pope would have been far less significant as a political figure in European and global history. There was a long history of competition between religious and secular leaders in the church in Western Europe; this would have continued without the Crusades, and I suspect the Pope would have got to the same place of wielding real power in the end some other way. Peter the Hermit, after heavy defeat in battle, was stopped from fleeing to the safety of Constantinople and made to suffer the same dangers and tribulations of his fellow crusaders. The prominent kings of Western Europe such as France, England and the Holy Roman Emperor took no part as, ironically, having all been excommunicated by Pope Urban II they were excluded from taking part in a 'holy war'! For the prominent nobility and military leaders, such as Raymond of Toulouse and Godfrey of Bouillon, the capture of Jerusalem was to catapult them into the realms of stardom, idealising their exploits, their honour and their heroism through heavily romanticised song and literature. The realities of anti-Semitism and the massacre of innocent men women and children after the capture and fall of the Holy City were to be ignored or conveniently forgotten. Now there was a new idealised benchmark against which levels of chivalry, honour and piety would be upheld by those crusaders who were to come, as well as firmly fixing the accepted image of the crusading knight into history for hundreds of years. Defeat of these 'heroes' would have painted a very different picture altogether.

Were there potential flaws that could have led to defeat or was victory inevitable?
This very much depends on perspective. Seen from the perspective of the capture of Jerusalem as being the sole purpose of the First Crusade then yes, it turns into a great success; but taking the Crusades as a whole they ended in failure. So, the First Crusade can be seen as a classic case of winning a battle but losing the war.

But if we are to look at the First Crusade on its own, it's a different story. It could have ended in disaster on multiple occasions. In one way, it is incredible that it did not do so, especially during the Siege of Antioch in 1098.

It should also be remembered that after travelling such a huge distance, battles and disease took a horrific toll on numbers, with only a fraction of the original armies actually making it to the walls of Jerusalem, leaving them vulnerable to larger forces and defeat or victory very much on a knife edge.

Would defeat have stopped any future Crusades in their tracks?
Defeat would have meant that an army of at least 60,000, and by some estimates and reports perhaps as many as 100,000, had failed; something of a substantial blow to the reputation of Western military might and expertise, and the stomach for any future conflict in the name of Christ or honour may have dissolved. One can also speculate that such a catastrophe would have led to a much more galvanised and even greater response – but I doubt it. It's worth remembering that Jerusalem fell to the Arabs 450 years before the Crusades, and no one made much of an effort to recover if before the 1090s, emphasising the complex and various elements that had come into play that ignited the First Crusade and then fanned the flames.



RIGHT
Godfrey de Bouillon, appointed ruler of Jerusalem but refused the title 'king'

© Getty Images

THE POSSIBILITY

LATE 11TH CENTURY

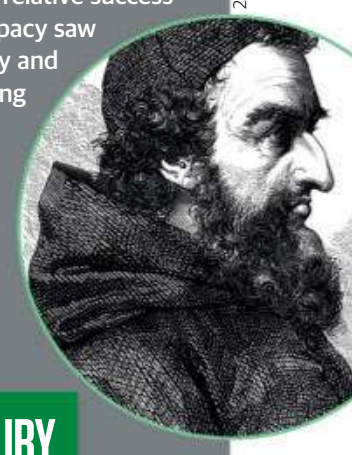
THE FALL OF BYZANTIUM'S EASTERN PROVINCES

This would have changed the nature and culture of the empire completely. The threat to their faith, trade, society and influence was already stretched to the limit. But if overwhelmed by the marauding Seljuk Turks the very fabric of the empire would have been decimated, with consequences not only for the Byzantine world, but also for Western Europe which would be denied its 'buffer zone' with Islam.

1099

THE UNION OF THE WESTERN AND EASTERN CHURCHES

Although at the time of the First Crusade relations between the Western and Eastern Christian Churches were a little cold, there was still the possibility of a stronger union on the cards. But, with the relative success of the First Crusade, the papacy saw its influence rise dramatically and so any possible strengthening of the Christian world through closer ties of East and West was derailed by the papacy's new sense of its own powers and independent ambitions.



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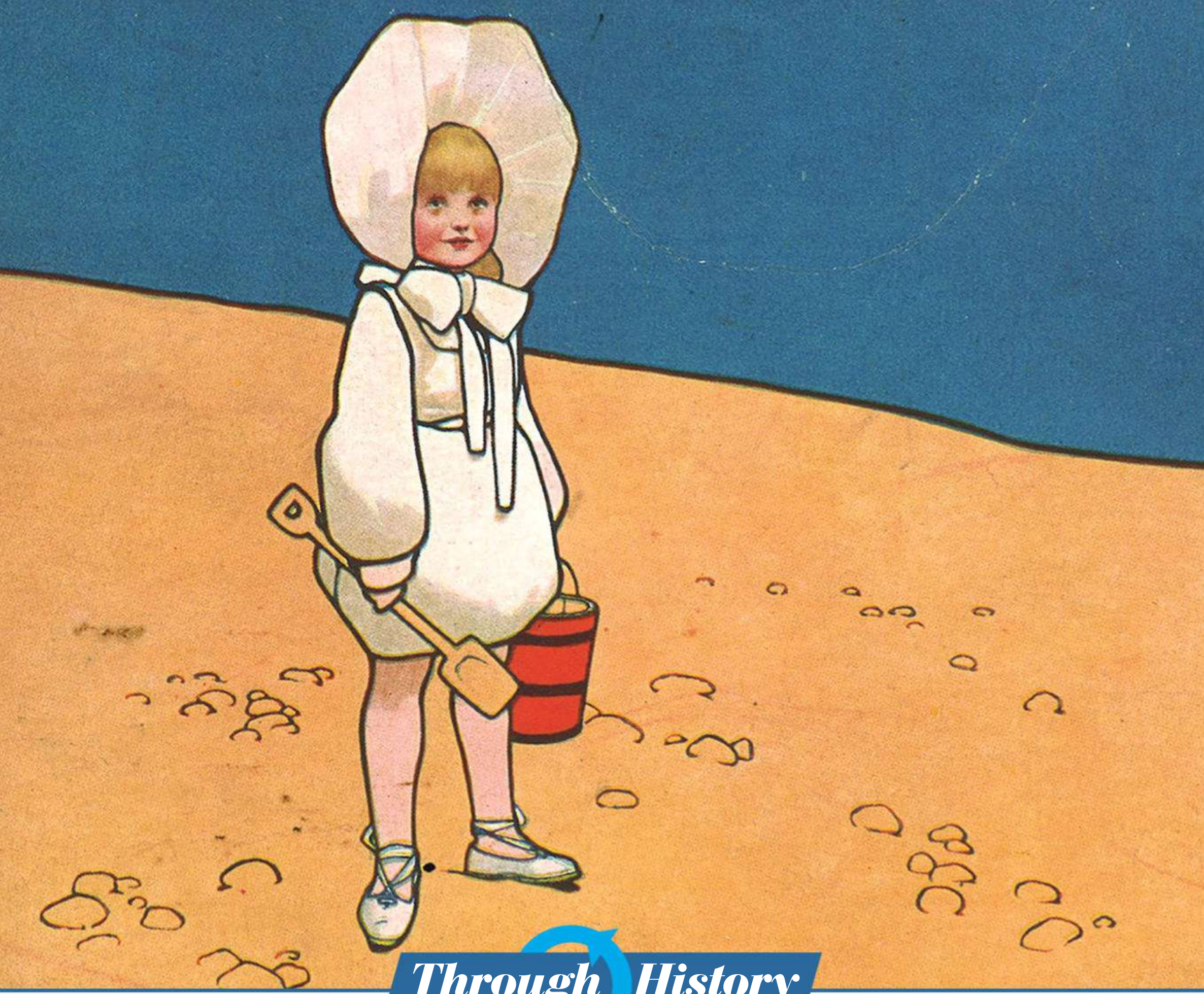
12TH CENTURY

THE ANCHORING OF THE SELJUK STATE

The development and expansion of the Turk's territorial and cultural ambition would have come far sooner than it did. By establishing a solid foundation around Baghdad, they would have been able to look confidently both towards the West, more deeply into Europe (as they eventually did), as well as to the East and India. In addition to their eventual spread around the southern Mediterranean and North Africa this would have become a formidable Islamic empire much sooner than the West expected or was prepared for.



Through History

JOHN HASSALL: THE POSTER KING

We turn back the clock to the golden age of the British seaside resort and peak into the life of one of the period's key artists

Arguably, the golden age of the British seaside holiday was during the 19th century and the first few years of the 20th. It was during this period that many of our perceptions surrounding the seaside trip were formed, from donkey rides to fish and chips. And while much of our perception of the seaside has changed, the colourful and simple postcards of John Hassall can still be found in gift shops all along the coast. Despite having a variety of styles, creating a number of striking and haunting images of World War I, Hassall was best known for his stark, cartoonish posters, which earned him the moniker of 'The Poster King'. Hassell created many of his most enduring pieces working as an advertising artist for David Allen & Sons, where he worked for over 50 years. While some of his most famous pieces such as 'Skegness is so Bracing' are from this period, his work was far more than just seaside posters.

Unicorn Publishing has now released *John Hassall: The Life And Art Of The Poster King*. With analysis by Lucanda Gosling, the book highlights many of Hassall's best works and shows there was much more than just beaches and bathing suits to his distinctive style.

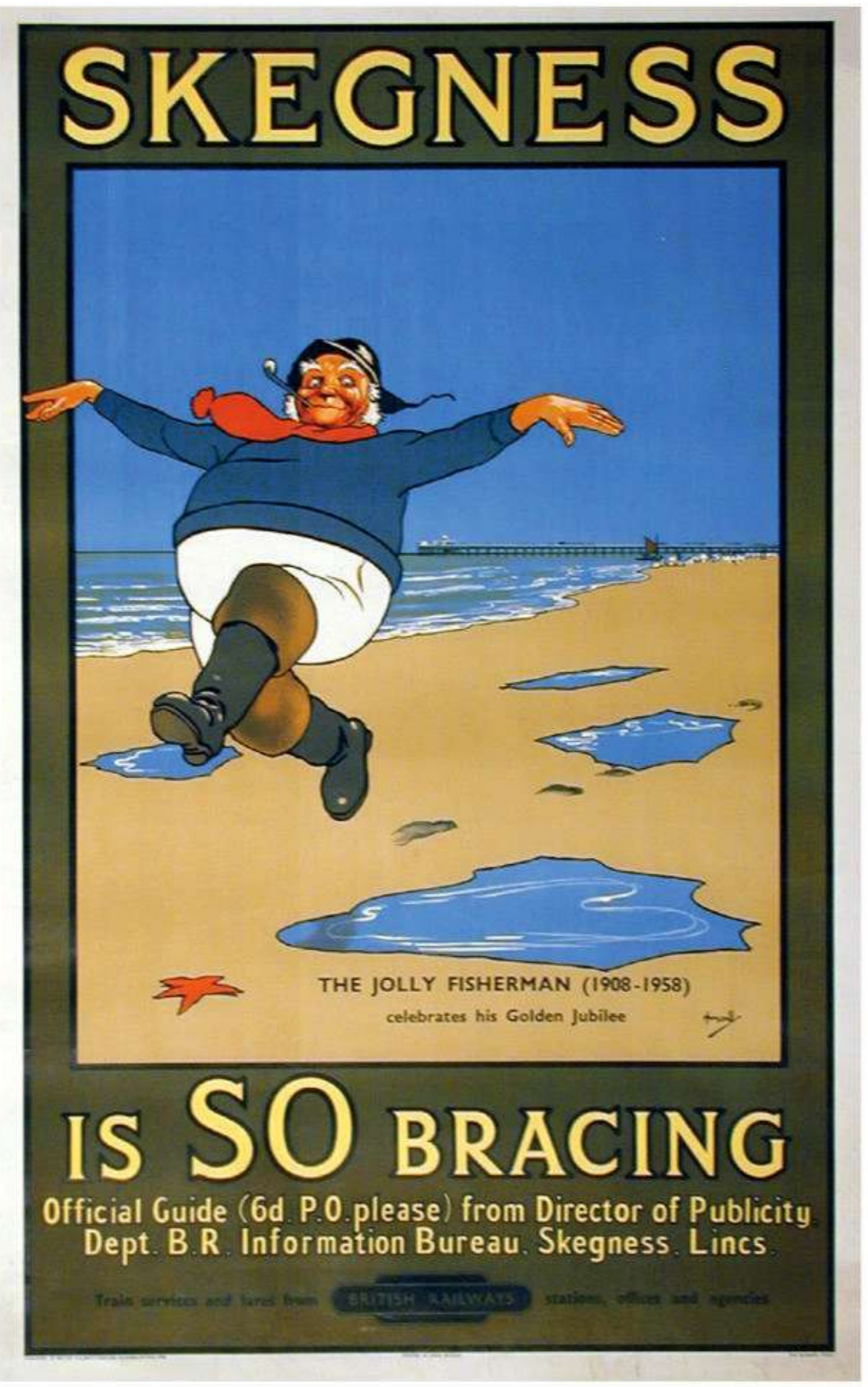
Main image: © University of Essex

John Hassall: The Poster King

JOHN HASSALL

John Hassall was born in 1868 in Walmer, Kent. As a young man he spent a brief period of time farming in Manitoba before travelling to Antwerp and Paris to study. Here he became heavily influenced by the artist Alphonse Mucha. This photograph pictures him in his studio in 1909.

© University of Essex


SKEGNESS
THE JOLLY FISHERMAN (1908-1958)
celebrates his Golden Jubilee
IS SO BRACING
Official Guide (6d. P.O. please) from Director of Publicity
Dept. B.R. Information Bureau. Skegness. Lincs.
BRITISH RAILWAYS

SKEGNESS IS SO BRACING

One of the most humorous and memorable of Hassal's poster designs is this one for Skegness. So famous was this poster that it was credited with establishing the seaside town's success. While many of his posters show resorts as crowd-free, in this case it was due to necessity – there were no landmarks to use.

© Lucinda Gosling

SAFETY FOUNTAIN PENS

Hassall's original unlettered proof for a poster for 'Onoto Self-Filling Safety Fountain Pen', prepared for the *Happy Annual* 1907. The Onoto self-filling pen was something of a landmark creation at a time when ink was inserted manually, the company still exists and continues to produce luxury pens.

© University of Essex

PANTOMIME

A particularly striking series of illustrations was created for the *Children's Pantomime A B C*, and is one of the most celebrated of his illustrations for children's books. Hassall created numerous posters for pantomime, further cementing a specific style to a Victorian tradition.

© Geoffrey Beare and Heath Robinson Museum

RED RIDING HOOD

▲ Hassall's poster for *Red Riding Hood* is particularly striking and very different from the stereotypical images related to the story. Hassall would produce another poster for *Red Riding Hood*, and in both he chooses to feature the wolf lurking in the background and not in the foreground.

© Twentieth Century Posters

GOOD QUEEN BESS

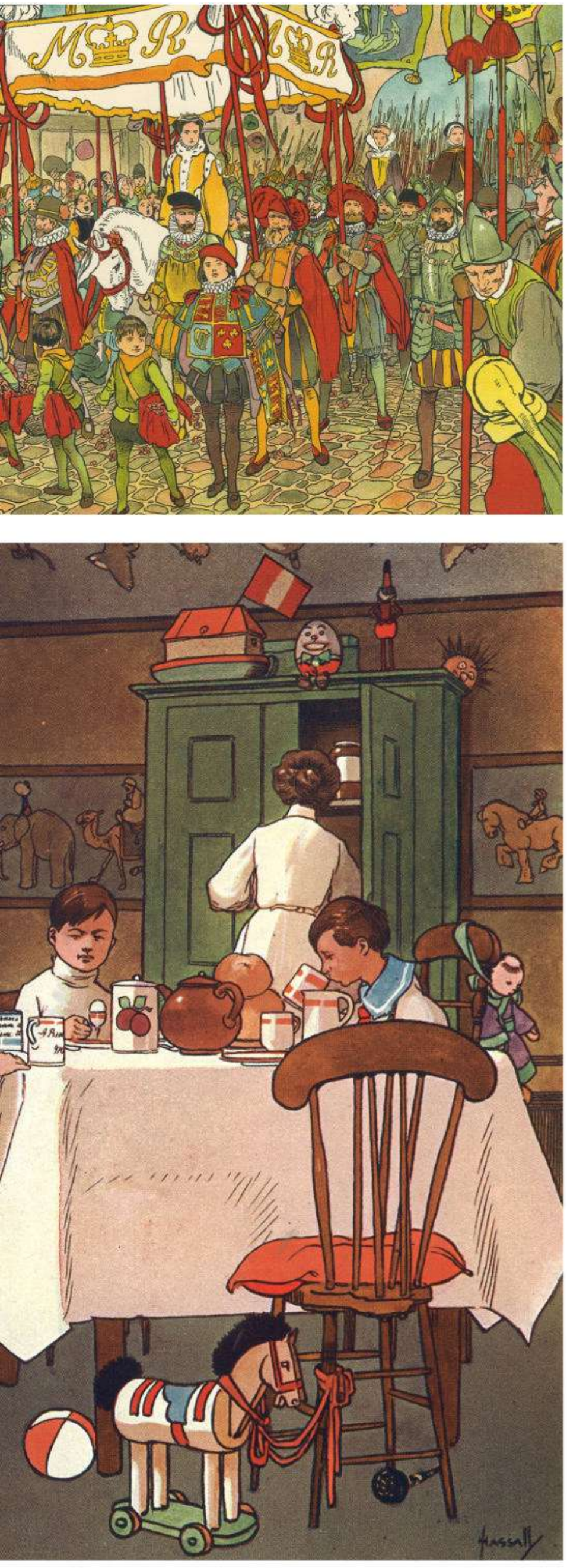
▶ An illustration from *Good Queen Bess*, a children's book detailing the life of Queen Elizabeth I. In response to a child's letter asking who his favourite historical figure to draw was, Hassall said Elizabeth I, and it's little surprise as he illustrated her several times.

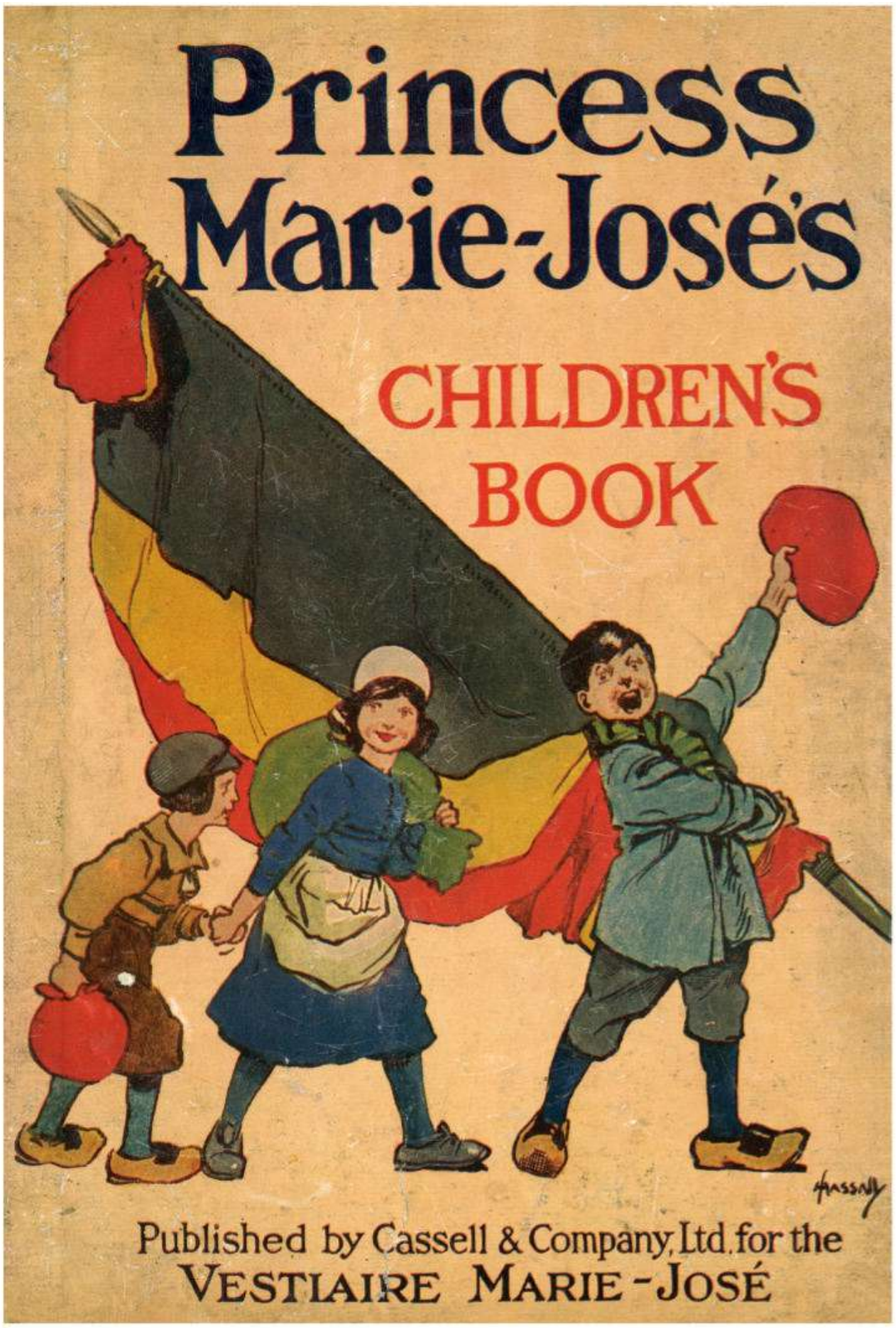
© Vanessa Gibson

TEATIME

▶ One of a number of illustrations from *Miss Manners*, described as, "a very pretty book for children," and published in 1909. In this image Hassall plays with his simple style and instead of using a plain and sparse background he clutters the scene with children's toys.

© University of Essex

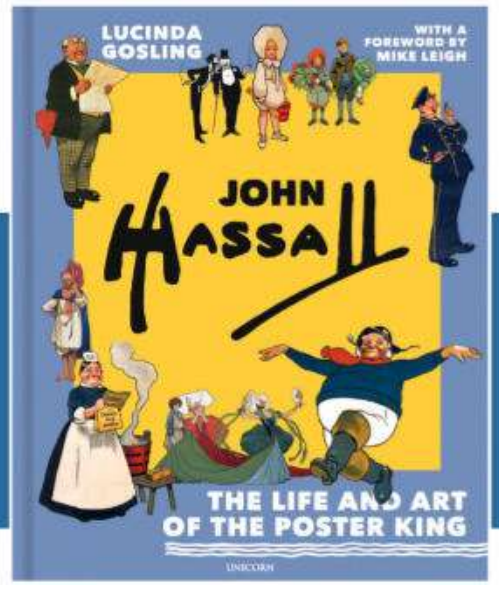




PRINCESS MARIE-JOSÉ'S CHILDREN'S BOOK

▲ Published during the World War I, *Princess Marie-José's Children's Book* was intended to raise money for an organisation providing clothes for children trapped behind the fighting lines in Flanders. Hassall did several such projects, helping to raise money for civilians during the war.

© Lucinda Gosling



John Hassall: The Life and Art of the Poster King
is released by Unicorn Publishing on 15 April priced £30

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

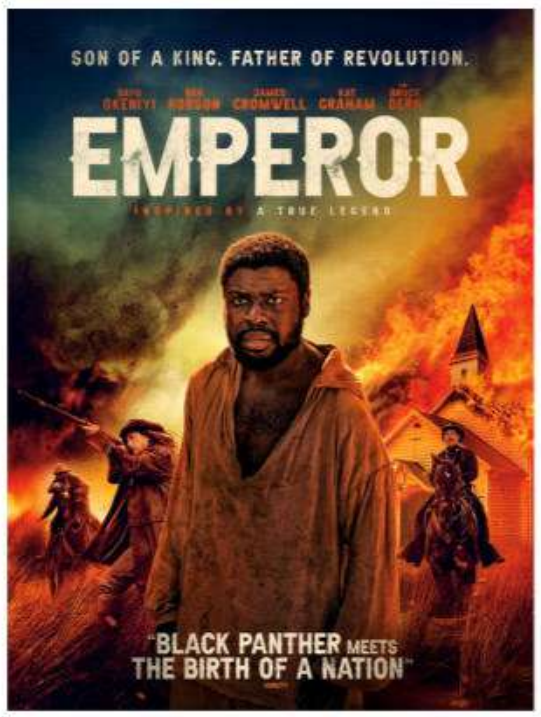


Image source: Kaleidoscope Entertainment

EMPEROR

A 'print the legend' biopic of abolitionist Shields 'Emperor' Green

Certificate: 15 **Director:** Mark Amin **Cast:** Dayo Okeniyi, James Cromwell, Bruce Dern, Harry Lennix **Released:** Out now

John Ford's 1962 revisionist cowboy saga, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, contains what is arguably among the most famous couple of lines uttered in the movies: "This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."

On the numerous occasions that American cinema has depicted its troubled mid-19th century past it definitely – perhaps defiantly – sticks to the dubious, if self-aware, maxim set out in Ford's film, making the intersection between history and romantic myth something of a crossroads of possibilities in heavy fog.

Mark Amin's imaginary take on Shields Green, a participant in the 1859 raid on the US arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, a doomed attempt at insurrection, with the abolitionists hoping to start a conflict to end slavery, opts for campfire storytelling in favour of delivering anything approximating the truth. Bar an association with African American social reformer Frederick Douglass, so little is known about Shields Green that Amin's 'opt for the legend' or 'fill in the blanks' stance is the only way forward.

Green, who gave himself the imperious and striking nickname 'Emperor', is depicted as a slave who hotfooted it from a South Carolina plantation. He was then involved in a series of perilous adventures and, through the brave network known as the Underground Railroad, ended up fighting at the side of John Brown, the white abolitionist who believed violent means were necessary in getting the US government's attention. Brown was the mastermind behind the bravura Harpers Ferry raid, which ended in defeat, with all survivors hanged for treason, and the staunch moralist is played by one of the great character actors: James Cromwell. His casting brings welcome quality to proceedings, for *Emperor* is too often a superficially engaging action-adventure film with too much portentous dialogue, an overbearing, syrupy score and anonymous, if competent, direction.

The film's honourable intentions as a story of Black uprising shines a light on an episode in pre-Civil War history that might not be as well-known as others, however, *Emperor* cannot mask its clunky nature. And in sticking so closely to *Liberty Valance*'s maxim, Amin robs Shields Green's story of its inherent tragedy and far more fascinating dimensions. It's as if the director sought a marriage between Quentin Tarantino's blaxploitation homage *Django Unchained* and Steve McQueen's harrowing biopic *12 Years A Slave*, without really finding its own identity and voice.

Despite obvious issues, *Emperor* moves along at a clipping pace, is far from dull and is engagingly performed by the principal cast members. As well as the always-watchable James Cromwell, these include instantly recognisable actors such as Bruce Dern and Harry Lennix, further bolstering the project's historical weight and appeal. The material is all there for a superior drama to be made by a filmmaker with greater vision and who opts for a more fact-based approach than the tall yarn spun by Amin. *Emperor*'s aims are righteous and worthy, even if the film ultimately isn't the sum of its tantalising parts. ***MC***

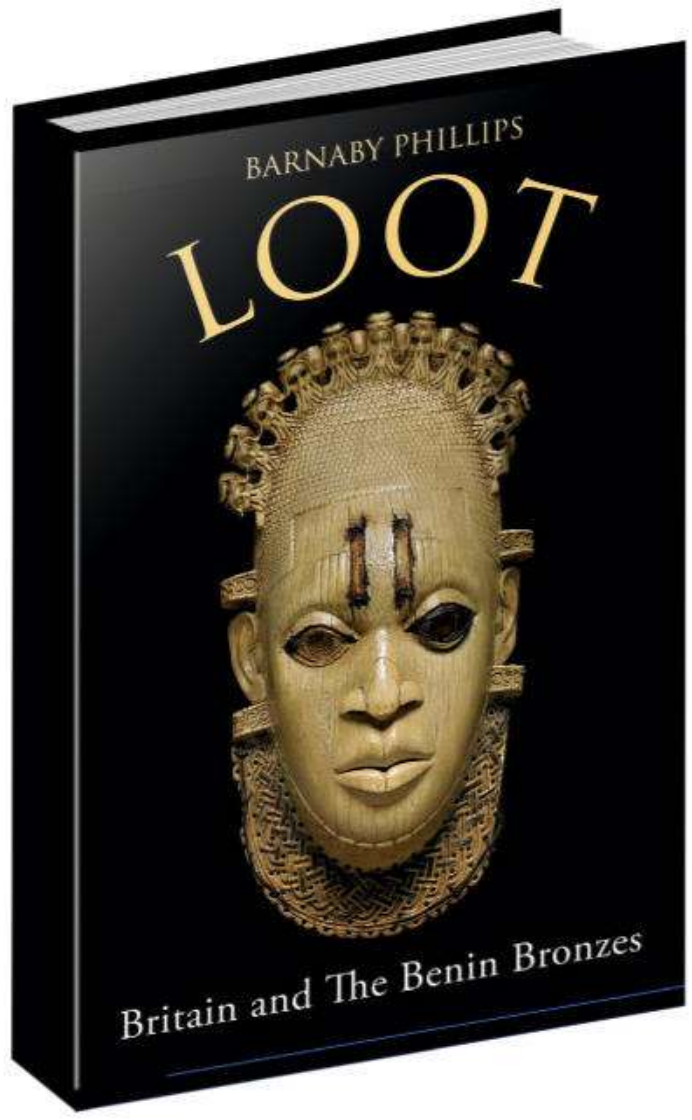
★★☆☆☆

Reviews by
Martyn Conterio, Jessica Leggett, Callum McKelvie, Catherine Curzon

LOOT

A compelling and timely story, filled with important questions

Author Barnaby Phillips **Publisher** Oneworld Publications
Price £20 **Released** Out now



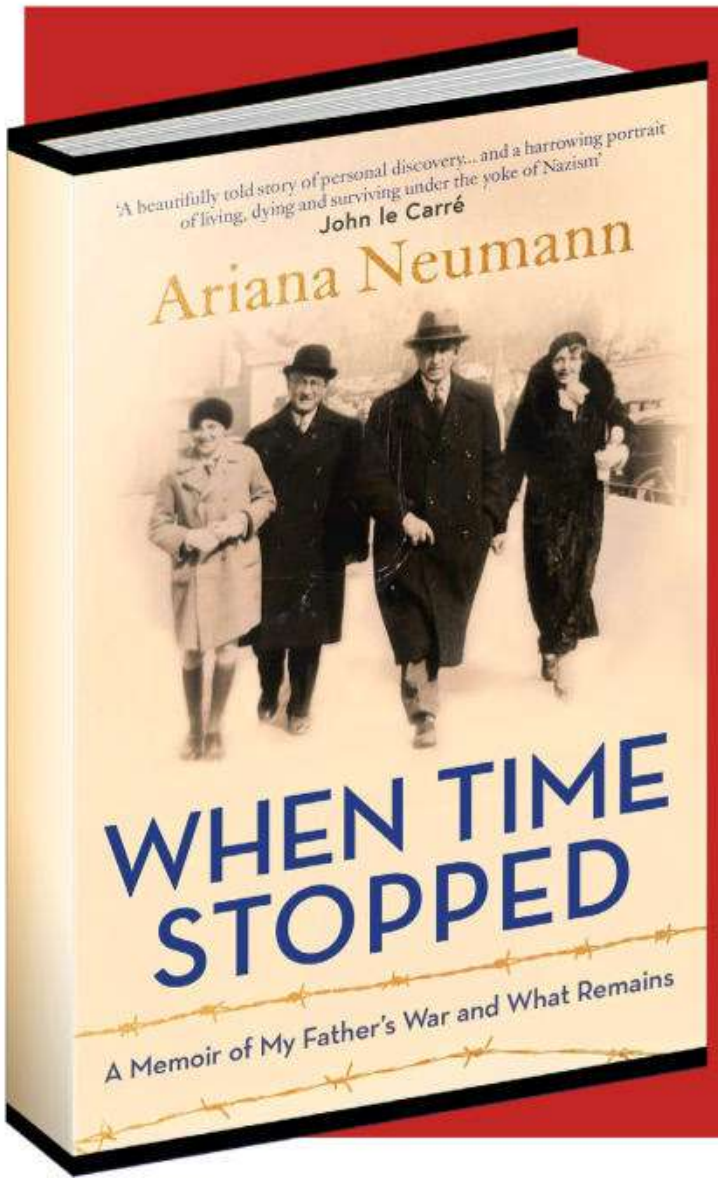
In 1897, the killing of British officials in the Kingdom of Benin resulted in horrific retaliation. Within weeks of the deaths, Britain had razed Benin to the ground. The king was sent into exile, his territories annexed, and Benin's cultural treasures were seized and brought back to Britain.

In *Loot: Britain And The Benin Bronzes*, Barnaby Phillips tells the story of the destruction of the Kingdom of Benin and the fate of its people and treasures. The Benin Bronzes were put on display in the British Museum and became the hottest ticket in London, changing attitudes to African culture across the continent. Yet today the Benin Bronzes still reside in the British Museum, despite calls for them to be returned to Africa.

Loot is a timely book, raising the question of what exactly should happen to the Bronzes now. In doing so, it examines empire and colonialism, as well as the question of cultural restitution. Phillips weaves a compelling and evocative narrative from the off, peopled by a cast that propels the story forward, sending the reader on a voyage of discovery that raises some very important questions indeed.

This is an impeccably researched book, which attempts to untangle more than a century of stories. It is accessible, packed with drama and utterly fascinating. It should appeal to a wide audience, from those with an interest in the history of colonialism to art historians and readers who are simply looking for a book that will be difficult to put down. ***CC***

★★★★★


'A beautifully told story of personal discovery... and a harrowing portrait of living, dying and surviving under the yoke of Nazism'
John le Carré
Ariana Neumann
WHEN TIME STOPPED
A Memoir of My Father's War and What Remains

WHEN TIME STOPPED

A daughter discovers her father's wartime secrets

Author Ariana Neumann **Publisher** Scribner **Price** £8.99 **Released** Out Now

Ariana Neumann's *When Time Stopped* is not your usual historical memoir. Most tend to recount the author's personal experiences of a specific period, but *When Time Stopped* is about a daughter discovering what both her father and family underwent living under the Nazis in World War II.

The book opens by recounting Ariana's childhood reminiscences of her father, before detailing how he left her a mysterious box with an identity card belonging to someone called "Jan Šebesta". From there we jump from Neumann's own experiences to those of her father as she pieces together his hitherto unknown life.

The personal nature of the story and how it's being relayed results in a work that can be hard going and deeply moving. Yet it is through choosing to tell the story this way that *When Time Stopped* gains much of its sublime power. The opening chapters, in which Neumann relates her childhood in Caracas, paints a vivid picture of her father as she knew him, as well as cementing the idea of a mystery in his past. As we find out more about her father's role during the war, we're allowed into the very personal journey on which Ariana found herself. Photographs of the various documents and individuals mentioned throughout allow us even further insight into her research.

When Time Stopped is a powerful meditation on family and love, as well as another poignant reminder of the evil of the Nazis. ***CM***

★★★★½

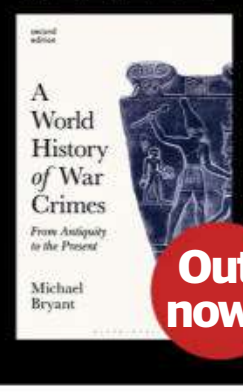
Out now!

History of Monsters & Mythical Beasts

Discover the strange and terrifying story of mythical beasts, from ancient legends to modern myths. Explore the creatures found all over the world, and find out which ones are thought to bring prosperity and luck... and which ones want you for their dinner!

Buy *History of Monsters & Mythical Beasts* in shops or online at **magazinesdirect.com**
Price: £15.99

HISTORY of WAR **RECOMMENDS...**



Out now!

A World History of War Crimes

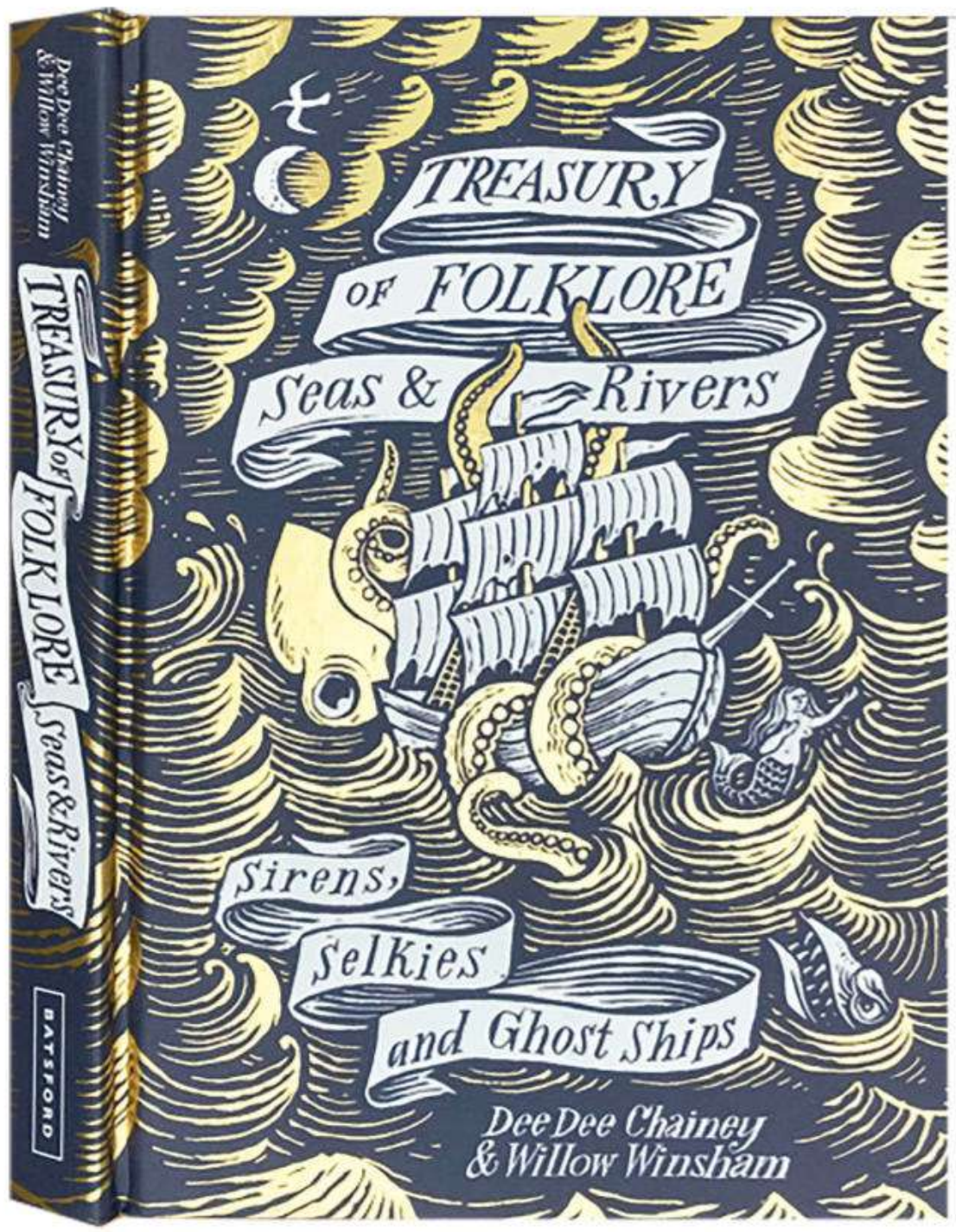
Author Michael Bryant
Price £26.99 **Publisher** Bloomsbury

Mention the term 'war crimes' and the contemporary imagination conjures up an image of a roomful of grim-faced Nazis awaiting their death sentence in a Nuremberg court in 1946. Author Michael Bryant takes the story back more than 10,000 years to remind us that Stone Age societies were no strangers to indiscriminate violence. Bryant's exhaustive research focuses on deep structures underlying atrocities in warfare.

TREASURY OF FOLKLORE: SEAS & RIVERS

An enjoyable dive into the depths of watery folklore

Author Dee Dee Chainey & Willow Winsham **Publisher** Batsford **Price** £12.99 **Released** Out Now


Dee Dee Chainey & Willow Winsham
TREASURY of FOLKLORE
Seas & Rivers
Sirens, Selkies and Ghost Ships
Dee Dee Chainey & Willow Winsham
BATSFORD

For thousands of years, stories and traditions associated with water have been gathered and repeated by numerous societies and cultures, each with its own version to tell. As a result, the mysteries of the seas, oceans and rivers around the world have continued to fascinate us for generations.

In *Treasury Of Folklore: Seas & Rivers*, archaeologist Dee Dee Chainey and historian Willow Winsham – founders of #FolkloreThursday, a popular website and Twitter account – bring together the captivating tales of the oceans from across the globe. They explore various areas of watery folklore, from mermaids, selkies and sirens to ghost ships, lost cities and the monsters who lurk in the depths.

The book is divided into two parts, with the first dedicated to stories about the oceans and the second focusing on those regarding rivers and lakes. Overall, there is a diverse range of folklore collected from different continents.

There are a few tales and figures that may already be known to many readers, for example The Little Mermaid, Maui the trickster demi-god, the monstrous Kraken and the Flying Dutchman. But there are also plenty of stories that are likely to be new to those who are not necessarily familiar with watery folklore.

While the authors explore some of the tales and traditions in-depth, others are treated with just an overview and might leave you wishing for more. At most, each one is just a few pages long and there are a couple of list features, 'Top Tales from the Seven Seas' and 'The Top Five River Spirits from Around the World', which are both fun and quick to read. It would also be remiss not to mention the woodcut drawings that beautifully illustrate many of the enchanting stories.

It is obvious that Chainey and Winsham have taken great care in putting together this collection of folklore, while also examining how the stories are perceived and retold today. In their authors' note, the pair explain how they have tried to use sources from the culture where each tale or tradition originates as a mark of respect.

In particular, they highlight the issue of cultural appropriation, and throughout the book they take the time to address the stories that have been appropriated and the damage that has stemmed from this. This is not an easy task and so it's worth acknowledging, because these tales play a crucial role in the cultural heritage of different societies.

Aside from this, *Treasury Of Folklore: Seas & Rivers* is a thought-provoking read, emphasising the similarities between different societies and cultures. Despite hailing from all corners of the globe, the tales featured in this book all explore common themes such as fear, hope, love and dreams.

As humans – no matter where we live or where we come from – we are all connected through these watery tales and traditions that give us a sense of belonging and resonate with us all. Without a doubt, this book is a must-read for anybody who wants to take the plunge into the world of watery folklore. ***JL***

★★★★☆

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

A CALL TO SPY

Director: Lydia Dean Pilcher **Starring:** Sarah Megan Thomas, Radhika Apte, Stana Katic **Country:** UK, France **Released:** 2019

Three incredible true stories, mashed together in one tale

VERDICT: Many elements are true, but the main thrust is fiction

01 The film follows three prominent women in the SOE: Vera Atkins, Virginia Hall and Noor Inayat Khan. While as assistant (and later head of) F Section Atkins would've known both women, Hall and Khan likely never met as they worked in France two years apart.

02 Atkins recruits Hall in the film after a chance meeting in London. Hall was actually directed to the SOE after meeting a friend of Nicolas Bodington in Spain as she made her way out of France in 1940. She'd been driving ambulances for the French at the start of the war.

03 Hall's trek through the Pyrenees to escape capture in 1942 is real. The trek through the height of winter took three days and she was actually arrested by the Spanish authorities upon her arrival as she didn't have the correct papers. She was released after six weeks.

04 Noor actually arrived in France in June 1943 and was the only wireless operator in her region for some time. She was betrayed by someone in her network and held by the Nazis for over a year, then killed at Dachau. The film gets these later details mostly correct.

05 As in the film, Atkins attracted scrutiny in SOE likely because of her Romanian birth, but kept her role thanks to the F Section chief. As in the film, she was granted citizenship and rank as a Flight Lt in the WAAF, but the timings are a little off.

Main image: © Signature Entertainment UK
5x inset image source: Netflix

Main image: © Alamy
Inset image: © wiki/National Archives

TAMALES

A DELICIOUS CULTURAL STAPLE, MESOAMERICA, C.8000-5000 BCE – PRESENT

Maize was the most important food source for the Maya civilisation and it is a key ingredient for tamales, a mainstay of the Mesoamerican diet. Enjoyed by the Olmecs, Toltecs, Maya, Aztecs alike, tamales were portable and therefore an ideal choice for armies on the move, as well as hunters and travellers away on trips. Contemporary sources tell us that tamales were even served to the Spanish when they arrived in Mesoamerica in the 16th century. Consisting of cornmeal dough with a meat, fish, vegetable or even sweet filling steamed inside corn husks or banana leaves, tamales are a popular street food in Mexico and Central America, and they are also frequently served for holidays and celebrations.

Ingredients

For the tamale dough

- 230g masa harina
- 225g corn husks
- 150g lard
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt

For the tamale filling

- 675g pork loin
- 475ml water
- 4 red chillies
- 1 large onion, halved
- 1 clove garlic
- 1½ tsp salt

METHOD

01 Start by making the pork filling. Place a large saucepan on the hob and add the pork, onion and garlic. Pour in enough water to cover the pork and then bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and leave the pork to simmer until cooked, for about two hours.

02 Wearing gloves, carefully remove the stems and deseed the red chillies. Add them to another saucepan, cover with 475ml water and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and then transfer the chillies and water into a blender, to create a chilli sauce.

03 Pass the chilli sauce through a sieve to ensure it's smooth and then mix in the salt. Remove the cooked pork from the saucepan and leave it to cool. Keep the stock, we will need this for the tamale dough later.

04 When it has cooled down, shred the pork. Once shredded, mix the pork with 250ml of your homemade chilli sauce and set aside. Next, fill a bowl with warm water and soak the corn husks for around an hour.

05 For the dough, beat together the lard and a tablespoon of the pork stock in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the masa harina, salt and baking powder. Stir the masa harina mixture into the lard, gradually adding more stock until a spongy dough is formed.

06 Remove the corn husks from the water and pat them dry. Position the corn husks with the wide end towards you and spread a couple of tablespoons of dough in the centre of the corn husks to about 5mm – 1cm thickness, leaving space at the top and bottom. Then place a tablespoon of pork filling into the centre of the dough.

07 Fold the long sides of the corn husk like a taco and press the masa dough so that it completely seals in the filling. Next, fold one long side of the husk over the dough and then roll to seal the dough, before folding down the tapered end of the husk.

08 Place the tamales standing upright into a steamer, with the sealed end at the bottom. Leave them to steam for one hour – you'll know they're ready when the husk pulls away easily from the tamale!

09 Allow the tamales to rest for a few minutes so that the masa dough can firm up. Peel off the husks and serve the tamales immediately.

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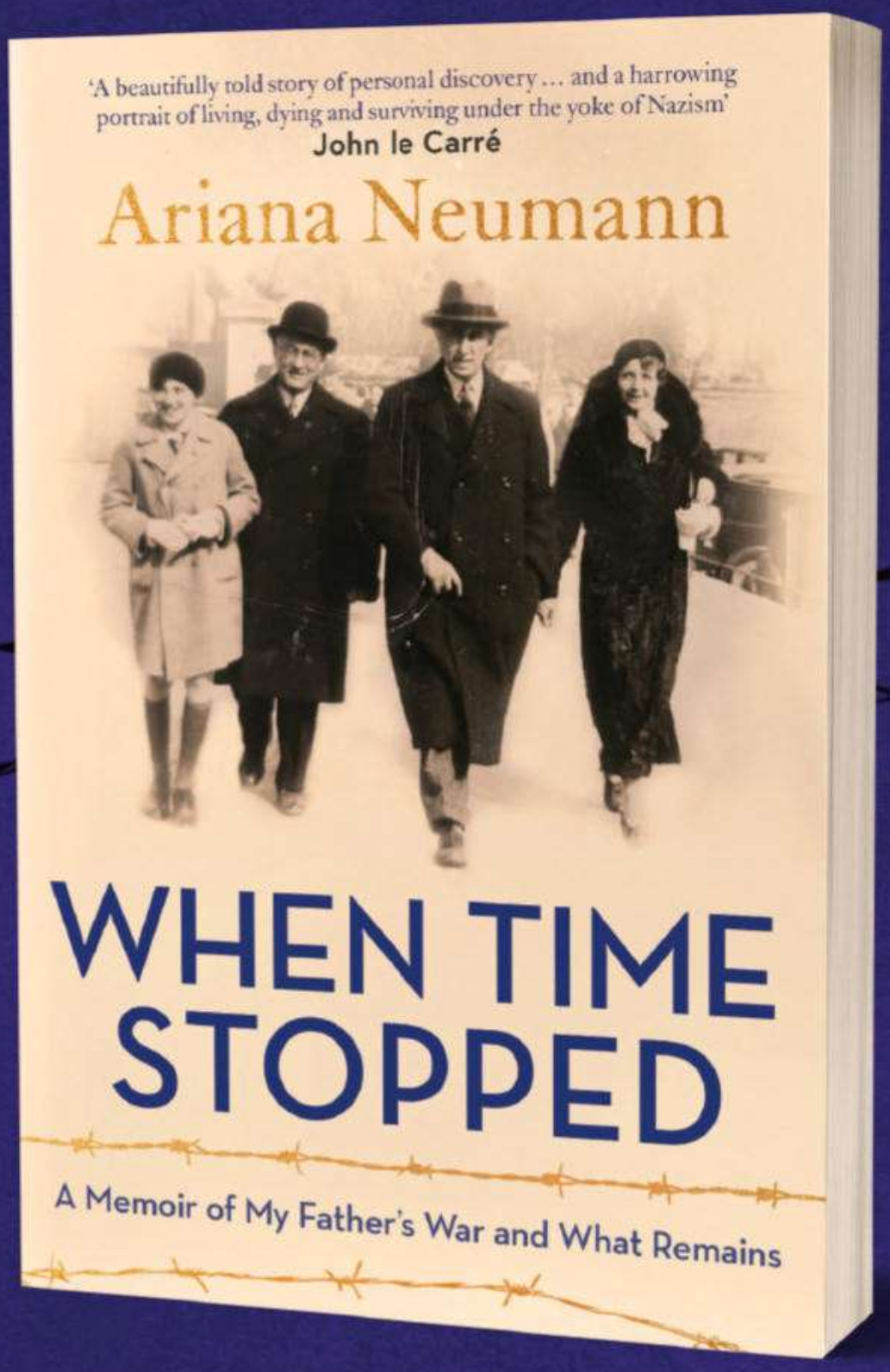
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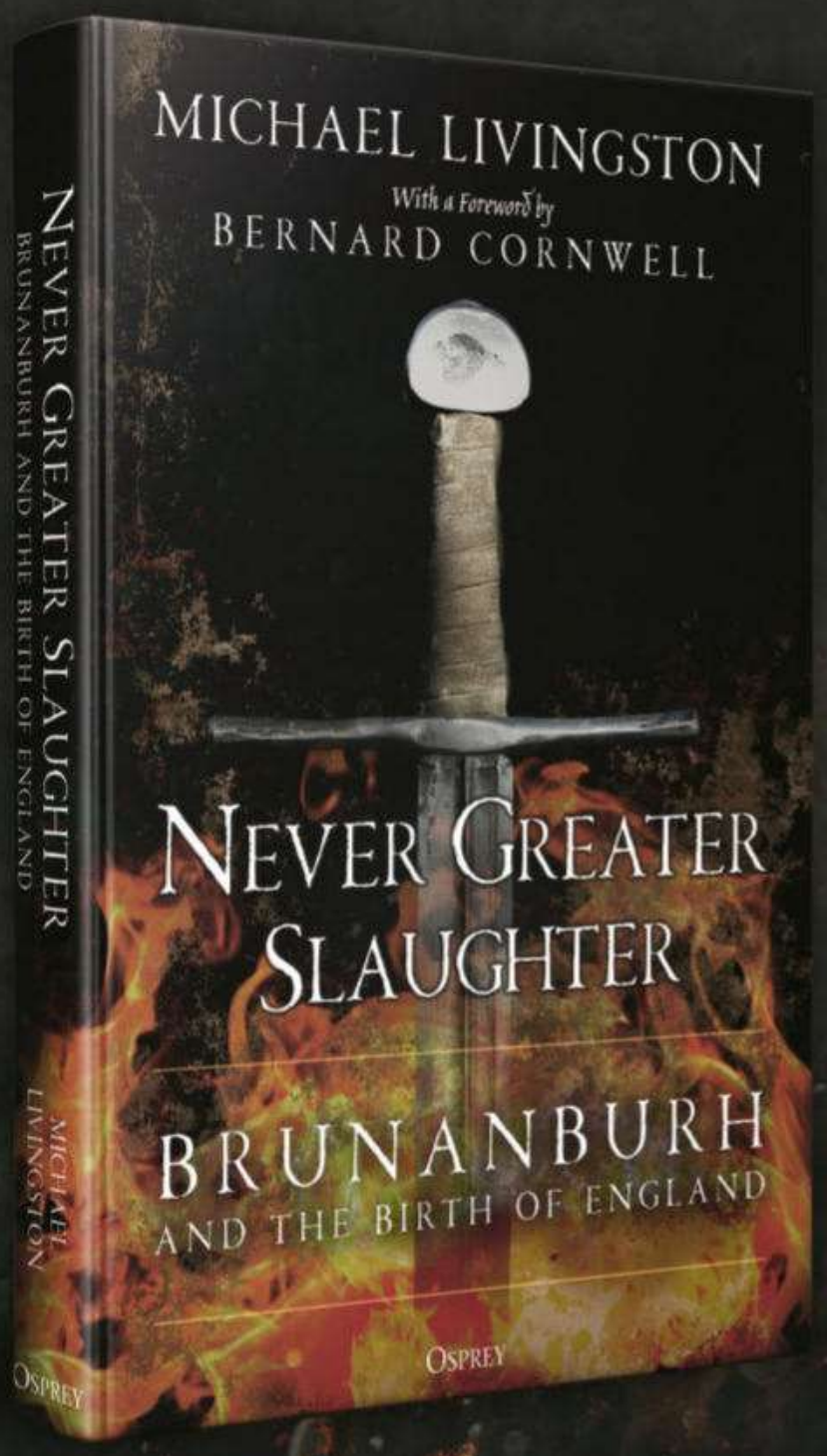

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